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# THE AMERICAN REVIEW

ARE WE RELEVANT TO THE FUTURE?

Chester Bowles

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISSENT

James Russell Wiggins

CONGRESS VS. THE PRESIDENT

James MacGregor Burns

JAMES BALDWIN: EVERYONE KNOWS HIS NAME

Joseph Epstein

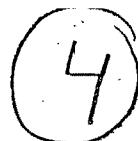
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JANUARY 1969



# THE AMERICAN REVIEW

*Contemporary articles of opinion*



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# THE AMERICAN REVIEW

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## THE BOWSPRIT

Dr. Robert R. Brooks, Editor of *The American Review*, 1963-68, has returned to the U.S.A. to resume his duties at Williams College, to the regret of his many friends here. During his tenure as Editor the circulation of *The American Review* increased from 12,500 to 35,000, colour photography was introduced, and a consistent effort was made to include in each issue articles from a wide variety of scholarly disciplines and cultural interests. Fortunately for the *Review*, its Managing Editor continues in office.

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After reviewing American foreign policy since 1945, *Ambassador Chester Bowles* discusses in "Are We Relevant to the Future?" the alternative courses open to the U.S.A. in the decade ahead—a decade which he sees as decisive for generations to come.

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There are both a duty to dissent and a limit to the tactics permissible in expressing dissent, concludes *James Russell Wiggin* in "The Rights and Responsibilities of Dissent" in which he places recent dissent in America in the context of two hundred years of national experience with dissent and civil disobedience.

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*James MacGregor Burns* describes in "Congress vs The President" the "check and balance" system in the American government; the forces which have strengthened the Presidency relative to Congress; and the continuing necessity of concerted effort by the President

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and Congress—and possibly a reform of the structure of Congress—in order to achieve effective action.

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In "James Baldwin: Everyone Knows His Name," *Joseph Epstein* presents a critique of the work of a man whom, he says, "one simply cannot afford to ignore" if one "would claim even an approach to understanding the experience of the Negro in America."

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A new international "life-style," reflected in the behaviour of young people and in recent cultural trends, is taking shape, according to *Robert Jay Lifton*. Analysing it in "Protean Man," he locates its sources in the breakdown of traditional symbols and the impact of cultural influences spread throughout the world over mass communications networks.

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The National Museum in New Delhi exhibited in September and October 1968 some stone rubbings made by Martha Caldwell while her husband was serving as U.S. Consul in Madras. Six of them are reproduced here.

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*Sam Glucksberg* describes in "Some Ways to Turn on New Ideas" some research on the creative process currently under way at Princeton University which suggests that creativity is not confined to a few gifted people, is inherent in man's nature, and can be encouraged by proper education.

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Two American professors write of the racial problem in America today. *James Farmer* in "Are White Liberals Obsolete in the Black Struggle?" sees black cohesion right and good in this period as a necessary step to Negroes becoming full Americans, with white people now needed only in consultative and

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advisory roles; *Raymond W. Mack* in "The Negro Opposition to Black Extremism" holds that most Negroes do not favour black separatism and will not espouse it if actual equality of opportunity in all areas, in addition to legal equality, comes soon enough.

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In "The Agricultural Revolution in Asia," *Lester R. Brown* reviews the impressive gains made recently in what "could well become the most significant world economic development since the economic rebirth of Europe following World War II" and suggests some of the emerging problems and benefits of the agricultural revolution.

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Some early predictions about the catastrophic impact of nuclear weapons have proved wrong, according to *Louis J. Halle* in "Lessons of the Nuclear Age," who concludes that the balance of nuclear power has acted as a restraining factor in world crises.

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In this issue BOOK WORLD contains an analysis by *Charles Sanford* of varying perspectives on contemporary life and moral values as revealed in recent books by four Americans and two Europeans.

M.C.

# ARE WE RELEVANT TO THE FUTURE?

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CHESTER BOWLES

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY in the postwar era can be divided into four periods or phases. The first covers the critically important period between the end of the war and the early 1950's; the second extends until 1960; the third from 1960 until the present; the fourth, and probably most decisive period, lies just ahead.

I do not suggest that the beginnings and ends of these periods can be determined with any degree of precision. Each flows into the other with significant overlaps. Nevertheless, they provide a convenient framework to consider the evolving world forces with which we have had to contend in the last twenty-three years, the adequacy of our response to these forces, and the challenges we are likely to face in the years ahead.

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REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM "TO HEAL AND TO BUILD: THE PROGRAMS OF LYNDON B. JOHNSON," EDITED BY JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS. 1968. McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY.

## PHASE I

V-J Day, August 1945, ushered in the first of these four phases as a confident America faced a new kind of world. We had led the struggle in Asia against an imperialist Japan and in Europe against the Nazis. Our democratic institutions were the model for a dozen newly independent governments.

After a hundred years of isolationism, the United States emerged into the new postwar world with unchallenged power and influence, determined to carry its share of responsibilities.

### *Challenges Met*

The first challenge came in Europe where we responded promptly and vigorously. When Stalin's Russia, in the tradition of Czarist expansionism, launched its push towards the Mediter-

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ranean, we threw our support behind Turkey and Greece and the pressure was relieved.

When the Soviet Union sought to engulf Berlin by cutting all rail and road access to the Western sectors, we again acted firmly. Within forty-eight hours American and British cargo planes were landing every ninety seconds at Tempelhof airfield to supply the embattled city. A few months later the Berlin blockade was lifted.

In June 1947, Secretary of State Marshall announced America's willingness to support a massive European economic recovery programme, a plan "not directed against anyone, but against hunger, chaos, and poverty." In 1948, the Organization of European Economic Cooperation was established joining seventeen European partners in the unprecedented and imaginative Marshall Plan.

At the same time, we organized a defence programme to assure the military security of Western Europe. In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed by fourteen nations, and NATO came into being.

### *Miscalculations*

In this first postwar phase, our record was one of imaginative concepts carried through vigorously and effectively. Yet in retrospect certain miscalculations are now evident.

It was logical and proper, for instance, that our immediate postwar concerns were focused on Europe. Europe represented a vast concentration of industrial resources; it controlled the

approaches to the Atlantic and stood astride the most important routes of world commerce. Even more important, it was in Europe that our Western ideals of liberty and humanism were born.

Consequently, it was not surprising that U.S. foreign policy during this critical period was in large measure an extension of the British policies which had helped maintain the peace of Europe between the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and World War I. This called for a power balance in Europe which the British had skilfully maintained by opposing any power or combination of powers that sought to dominate the Continent.

There was, however, a fundamental difference: in the nineteenth century a peaceful Europe was the primary requirement for a peaceful world. The economic, political, and strategic decisions concerning Asia and Africa were not made in New Delhi, Hanoi, Leopoldville, or Batavia, but in the imperial capitals of London, Paris, Brussels, and The Hague.

What we failed adequately to take into account in this first postwar phase was the revolutionary surge which was rapidly demolishing the old colonial ties and enabling the new nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to begin to shape their own destinies.

We also wrongly assumed that in the developing continents the primary danger, as in Europe, would be Communist movements manipulated by Moscow and Peking.

It was some years before we came to see that the revolutionary wave sweeping Africa and Asia was in fact generated

by political and economic forces deeply rooted in Western concepts of nationalism, economic progress, and self-determination. We credited the Communists with having created a vast political wave which in fact they were only trying, often rather ineffectively, to ride—a wave which had been created by the indigenous forces to which I have referred.

Whatever influence the U.S.S.R. and China exert today in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and in some areas it is considerable, is not primarily because of their Communist ideology but because they are strategically placed major powers, highly sensitive to the social, political, and economic forces which are making history.

Under the impact of this wave of nationalism, the British withdrew with dignity from their farflung empire. The Dutch left Indonesia, the Belgians pulled out of the Congo, and the French were driven out of Indochina and Algeria and finally withdrew from their remaining African possessions.

Our belated recognition of this massive political, economic, and social upheaval ushered in the second of the four postwar phases of American foreign policy.

## PHASE II

In dealing with these new global forces our conditioned reflex was an attempt to adapt our successful European experience to a totally different set of problems. A primary element of this effort was to draw nations which would agree to accept our leadership into military alliances, with few if any qualms

about their political systems.

In Asia this approach limited our military-political relationships to a number of friendly but relatively weak nations. With their inadequate support we set out to "contain" Communist China while the four largest non-Communist nations—Japan, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan—sat on the sidelines in various attitudes of neutrality.

### *Achievements*

This is not to ignore some notable accomplishments. Our effort to help build a stable, dynamic, friendly Japan was brilliantly successful. We rallied to the support of South Korea and led a massive U.N. effort to re-establish its independence. Indeed, in all parts of Asia, with the unhappy exception of French Indochina, our support for the new independence movements was unequivocal.

Similarly in Africa, despite our NATO ties with the then major colonial powers of Europe, we generally supported the anticolonial forces. In Latin America, our acceptance of the forces of change, while often timid, was a major improvement over our prewar posture.

Also on the positive side of the ledger was our realization that the challenge posed by the developing nations had important economic and social dimensions. Out of this understanding came President Truman's Point Four, the World Bank, our support to the specialized agencies of the U.N., and the Economic Assistance Programme, which was launched in India in 1952 during my first tour as Ambassador.

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### *Misconceptions*

Yet on balance it is evident that during the 1950's the United States Government lacked a clear concept of developmental techniques and priorities.

Instead of concentrating our economic assistance on those countries most willing and able to help themselves, our aid programmes often came to be used to bolster pro-American leaders who lacked effective political roots among their people. In some cases political unrest led to military dictatorship supported by misguided American military assistance programmes.

This misdirection of much of our early overseas developmental efforts was accompanied by our failure to educate the American people, press, and Congress in regard to the nature and dimensions of the new world challenge.

For instance, it has been generally assumed that our efforts to strengthen the nations of the developing world would be a relatively short-range affair similar to the reconstruction of Europe.

This was a serious misconception. In the case of the Marshall Plan we were dealing with long-established European nations with highly developed industrial skills, sophisticated concepts of government, modern technologies, and traditions of military organization and cooperation.

In much of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, we were working with new nations, which by and large had not yet generated the habits of thought, the codes of behaviour, the literacy, education, and social integration essential for the establishment of free institutions and

rapid economic progress.

It was also assumed that our economic assistance would automatically generate a feeling of warmth and gratitude towards the United States. Consequently, we expected those nations we had assisted to support our foreign policy objectives and to stand by our side in the United Nations. When they failed to do so we often scolded them for their "ingratitude."

These assumptions and reactions reflect our failure fully to understand either the political and psychological forces which have been shaping the developing countries or the limitations and purposes of economic assistance.

### *Assessment*

After long years of colonial rule the people and leaders of the new nations are acutely sensitive to any action by a foreign government which appears to infringe on their sovereignty. Their posture on many foreign policy questions is determined by an overriding desire to prove that they are their own masters, regardless of how many American toes they may step on in the process, or how much they may be acting contrary to what we believe to be their nations' interests.

My experience in the developing countries has convinced me that there is only one realistic justification for providing foreign economic assistance: to make it possible for those developing nations which are prepared to adopt enlightened economic policies to become politically and economically viable and prepared to contribute their growing

strength and influence towards the creation of a more stable world.

It is the task of the historians to strike a balance between the successes and failures of U.S. foreign policy in this second postwar stage. Our immediate concern is to consider the third phase which was ushered in by the election of the Kennedy-Johnson Administration in January 1961.

### PHASE III

With some, but by no means all, of the lessons of the 1950's in mind it may be said that we have made significant but by no means adequate progress.

#### *Achievements*

On the plus side there are many highly important achievements. These include;

The transition, still incomplete, to a new, more realistic relationship with the nations of Western Europe.

The launching of that exciting expression of youthful dedication, the Peace Corps.

The Alliance for Progress.

A more patient and realistic view of Africa.

A new recognition of the overriding importance of improved relations with Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.

The imaginative use of our vast capacity to produce food for export and an understanding of the urgent need to provide adequate development assistance to those nations which are genuinely prepared to help themselves.

On the positive side, too, there is now a much better understanding achieved at a heavy cost in money, blood, and good will, of the limitations of military power, and of the overriding importance of the forces generated by political and social change.

#### *Vietnamese Crisis*

It is not within the scope of this article to discuss the pros and cons of our position in Vietnam. However, it is fair to point out that much of the anguish which we have faced in that tragic area reflects our earlier failure fully to recognize the political and psychological forces at work in the underdeveloped continents.

The initial mistake occurred immediately following the war when we permitted the French to re-establish their colonial position in Vietnam. A few years later, when the Viet Minh rose in rebellion, we supported the colonial French with hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of military supplies.

If the French had left Vietnam when the Dutch and the British withdrew from their empires in Asia and Africa, a half million American troops would never have been called upon to fight in Vietnam and the people of Southeast Asia would have been spared their tragic ordeal.

However, if the Vietnamese crisis has convinced our Congress, press, and people that political stability in Asia, Africa, and Latin America can be created only by the people themselves and that in the absence of such stability costly and unpredictable armed conflicts are inevitable, much will have been gained.

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### PHASE IV

As we move into the decisive fourth phase of our postwar foreign policy, it is essential that we keep these lessons firmly in mind. What we need to understand is not only our strengths, which are formidable, but our limitations which also are real, coupled with a more realistic set of national priorities.

#### *Some Questions*

We have been spending some \$30 billion a year on an effort to establish a more politically stable Southeast Asia. Once this war is over, will we be prepared to spend even one-third of this sum in preventing future Vietnams in South Asia, Africa, and Latin America?

Can the American people, who spend tens of billions of dollars each year on cosmetics, nightclubs, cigarettes, and bubble gum, be persuaded to support the enlightened policies which are required to build a world in which their children and the children of their contemporaries abroad can live in peace, comfort, and dignity?

Our answers to these and other relevant questions will constitute an acid test of American political leadership in the 1970's. In this context let us consider the choices we now face in Asia where a majority of mankind lives.

In the next few years, I believe, one of three developments will almost surely occur:

(1) A frustrated and embittered United States will withdraw from Asia allowing China and/or Russia to fill

the vacuum,

(2) The United States will become engaged in a costly and impossible-to-win war with China, or

(3) A non-Communist, indigenous political consensus will gradually evolve in Asia solidly based on the areas of primary weight and influence. I refer to India, Japan, Australia, and Indonesia, which, in cooperation with Pakistan, Thailand, New Zealand, the Philippines, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea, are alone capable of providing the essential Asian counterweight to China.

Will we come to see that only through such an indigenous political-defence balance in Asia can we be relieved of the present heavy pressure on us—a question that is underscored by the decision early this year of the British Government to withdraw from practically all of its military commitments “east of Suez”?

Will we understand that any such free Asian coalition, however anti-Communist, cannot accept American control and direction without losing the support of its own people?

Will we also realize that its creation will take time, money, and infinite patience?

#### *India; China; U.S.S.R.*

In this framework, I believe, the emergence of a politically stable and economically viable India is of decisive importance. If the massive democratic experiment in India should fail there is little hope for peace and stability in

Asia. The reasons are clear;

India's population is greater than that of Africa and Latin America combined. More than half of the non-Communist people of Asia live in India.

India has survived twenty years of political freedom and has thus far maintained a genuine Parliamentary democracy underscored by four general elections. When we remind ourselves that scarcely a dozen nations in all of Africa, Asia, and Latin America are still governed democratically, this in itself is a major accomplishment.

If India's attempt to create a politically stable and economically viable society fails and this complex and often frustrating nation, with one-sixth of the human race, starts down the same slippery slope that China did a generation ago, all the blood and dollars which we have been pouring into our efforts to stabilize Southeast Asia will have been in vain.

But what of China itself? A non-Communist Asian coalition, anchored at the two ends by India and Japan, may for a decade or two provide an effective Asian counterweight to an embittered and irresponsible China. But for the long haul it is essential that China gradually be drawn into a rational relationship with the rest of mankind.

Although the door is now closed, we should seize whatever opportunities may arise to re-establish contacts of trade, culture, and diplomacy. By so doing we may hasten the day when that great and tragic nation can again become a partner

in the community of peaceful nations.

We must also recognize the decisive importance of our relations with the U.S.S.R., particularly in the next decade.

In the U.S.S.R., as in America, we may assume that a political tug of war is in process between advocates of international cooperation and understanding and those who are more at ease in a cold-war setting. In the years immediately ahead, much will depend on the ability of American political leaders to establish a greater measure of cooperation and understanding with the Soviet Bloc provided, of course, that Soviet leaders are prepared to meet us halfway.

Here, as elsewhere, a flexible approach to world problems and pressures is of great importance. A notable aspect of international relationship in the last twenty years has been the often decisive impact of unpredicted developments. I refer to such events as the dramatic recovery of Japan and Germany, the break in Soviet-Chinese relations, the sudden collapse of European colonialism in Africa, and the like.

We must assume that the next ten years will be characterized by equally dramatic happenings which will surprise the most competent observers. This calls for a resiliency that combines a capacity to deal with current problems coupled with an ability to adapt quickly to brand new situations.

#### *The Next Decade*

It should now be clear why I believe that the fourth postwar period, which is now in its beginning stages, will be

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decisive for generations to come. What is required of us is a capacity to understand how hundreds of millions of people—speaking different languages, worshipping different gods, and living under different conditions—think and feel, and then to act effectively on this understanding.

There is nothing new about their poverty, illiteracy, slums, and ill health; what is new is the deep, worldwide, growing conviction among these masses of underprivileged rootless human beings that better answers must soon be found.

These awakening peoples want something more than schools, houses, and "things." Above all else, they are seeking the sense of personal involvement and dignity which has thus far been denied them. Economic development experts who ignore these primary human goals and assume that an increase in gross national product automatically produces a similar increase in gross national stability are dangerously wrong.

It is understandable why so many of those with the greatest stake in the status quo view these vast political uncertainties with fear and confusion. But I believe history will determine that they reflect the churning of economic, social, and political forces which hold enormous promise for all mankind.

For two decades fantastic new technologies have been literally tearing apart old societies, upsetting the traditional rhythm of individual lives, and generating new hopes among hundreds of millions of underprivileged people who have come to see poverty, ill health, and slums as manmade evils which can and must be eliminated.

More than a century ago, the French student of democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, described this process in the following words:

Only great ingenuity can save a prince who undertakes to give relief to his subjects after long oppression. The sufferings that are endured patiently, as being inevitable, become intolerable the moment it appears that there might be an escape. Reform then only serves to reveal more clearly what still remains oppressive and now all the more unbearable; the suffering, it is true, has been reduced, but one's sensitivity has become more acute.

What was true in the more leisurely mid-nineteenth century is doubly true in our turbulent modern times. What is most uncertain is America's reaction to the challenge.

History is littered with examples of once great empires whose leaders and peoples assumed that they could somehow exist and progress as islands of power and affluence in a sea of misery, envy, frustration, and violence. Thus one by one they failed the primary test of national survival: the capacity to recognize, understand, and cope with political, social, and economic change. After brief periods of prestige, power, and glory, some were overwhelmed by their less fortunate but better adapted neighbours, while others were simply bypassed as irrelevant.

This leads us to the central, overriding question: Is our generation of Americans wise enough, courageous enough, and above all sensitive enough to cope

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effectively with the new forces which are stirring mankind? In other words, are we Americans relevant to tomorrow's world?

Many members of the younger generation are openly sceptical; while our military power and our gross national product soar, our influence, they point out, continues to shrink. Tens of millions of Asians, Europeans, Africans, and Latin Americans, who revere the ideals of Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt as much as any American, share their concern.

Acting in the framework of this new, turbulent but infinitely promising world, it is the task of the President, his en-

voys, his Administration, and the Congress to disprove the doubters, to relate our policies and our actions to the values on which our nation is based, and thus to prove that modern America is in fact dramatically, dynamically, supremely relevant to the freedom, dignity, and progress of man in the latter decades of the twentieth century.

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THE HON. CHESTER BOWLES, *American Ambassador to India*, wrote this essay early in 1968 as an introduction to the first section of "To Heal and to Build," a section entitled "World Revolutions—and Our Own."

# THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DISSENT

---

JAMES RUSSELL WIGGINS

AMERICANS HAVE HISTORICALLY manifested a toleration towards violent expressions of opposition that has confused many observers from other countries. At the same time, their memory as a people teaches them that a long and steadily accelerating tendency towards violent attack upon, and obstruction of, government may sometimes be a prelude to something even more serious.

There are intervals in every country's history when the normal outlets for political discontent seem inadequate to channel away the dissent of factions and groups that are too impatient to await the outcome of an orderly political contest for the mind of the majority.

The vast majority of those who now are dissidents from governmental policy in this country wish to have the govern-

ment remove their discontents; but the fact cannot be blinked that a certain minority would rather have the discontents remain and see government pushed to the extremes of force to suppress disorder.

This minority, we must assume, is not interested in the rights and responsibilities of dissent within the framework of a democratic society. They are interested in overturning that society. So their motives render them devoid of interest in any search for the proper limits on dissent within a democratic framework. They are dissenters from the system of government and not just from the policy of the government. With them, government and society, if it means to survive, has no recourse but overwhelming military force.

We are not concerned with locating the limits on their rights and duties, for revolution recognizes no limits, admits of no responsibilities, and contends for unlimited rights including the right to use force and violence. As Dr. William Sloane Coffin has put it: "You cannot ask the government to respect your right to be a revolutionary."

### *The Duty to Dissent*

The citizens with whom we are concerned stand on a different footing. Can we define for them the nature of the duty to dissent, and locate for them the appropriate limits on the right to dissent? And if we can establish some general principles, perhaps we can proceed to make some particular applications to specific dissents of our time.

Let us begin with the duty to dissent from the policy of government when that policy seems to the individual citizen to constitute a departure from national interest or moral rectitude. That there is such a duty, it seems to me, is the very essence of self-government, the very vital spark of a democratic system.

A people devoid of this impulse would induce such passivity into an electorate as to make the form of government a matter of indifference. And a people with this impulse will invest even the most unsatisfactory system of government with the vigour and force that may make it adequate to deal with society's problems.

It was because he was interested in keeping this spark of dissent alive that Thomas Jefferson viewed with equanimity the disorders of western Massa-

chusetts farmers who protested against strict debt laws in Shays' rebellion in 1786. He also worried over the stern measures taken by the Federal Government in 1792 against Pennsylvania farmers who rose up violently against a tax on whiskey.

He knew the country could survive the disorders, but that it couldn't survive the disappearance of a spirited citizenry insistent upon its rights and privileges. "To punish these errors too severely," Jefferson said of Shays' rebellion, "would be to suppress the only safeguard of the public liberty."

Americans are inclined to tenderness towards dissent by the instruction of their own history, by the exhortation of their philosophers; by the knowledge that truth is changing, and by the counsels of their heart—which tend to make them disrespect authority and admire nonconformity.

But there is another strain in their makeup, too—deriving from their respect for order, their belief in representative government, their confidence in the wisdom of the majority, and their belief in the integrity of their own government. And these character traits compete with the others in time of conflict.

In the decades prior to the Civil War, the United States presented a veritable laboratory experiment in dissent. Abolitionists in the North, kindred in spirit to Henry Thoreau, began with vigorous vocal dissent and proceeded to disobedience and to resistance to the enforcement of the fugitive slave laws and other statutes sympathetic to slavery. The citizens of the slave states responded with other kinds of disobedience and

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resistance, obstructing the movement of the mails and otherwise countering the abolitionists.

The War between the States, of course, was a dissent such as the nation has not seen since, providentially. During the anguish of this long struggle (1861-65) there were many other tests of Federal power to suppress dissent, ranging all the way from mere utterance to treason. It is interesting that in the midst of the Civil War public sentiment compelled the government to retrace its steps on many occasions when military authorities, in an excess of zeal, arrested citizens on the basis of mere utterance.

### *Labour, the Draft, and Politics*

The clash of opinion in America after Reconstruction revolved chiefly about the assertion of the rights of the rising labour classes against the expanding industrial America. None of the vocabulary associated with the Civil Rights Movement of the twentieth century appeared, but the unions, in fact, were fighting for economic rights that really were civil rights and that were not secured until the New Deal. Beginning with the great labour riots of 1877, these were violent decades.

The First World War started a new era in the history of dissent in the United States. There were more than 1,500 prosecutions and other judicial proceedings during the war, involving speeches, newspaper articles, pamphlets and books.

As had been the case during the Civil War, the draft and its enforcement produced a flood of dispute and dissension. Secretary of War Newton D. Baker informed the Attorney General that there

were 308,489 known desertions on June 10, 1918. On September 3, 1918, the Federal Bureau of Investigation attempted a roundup of slackers and in three days seized 50,000 men in theatres, restaurants, streetcars, railway stations, pool halls, and street corners. It was estimated that 1,505 were inducted into military service and 15,000 tabbed as delinquents.

The manner of carrying out this operation was severely criticized. Wives, mothers, and children picketed the places where the men were held. President Woodrow Wilson ordered the Attorney General to make a report on complaints. He took the blame for excesses committed.

Following World War I, dissent took its ugliest form. On June 2, 1919, the home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, across from the home of Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Roosevelt, was bombed—the front of the house was blown in and two bodies were found in the debris. Eight explosions—at homes of officials and wealthy persons—followed. At the scene of most of them were found leaflets proclaiming the beginning of a class war and hailing the victory of “the international proletariat.”

On September 16, 1920, an explosion in Wall Street near the J. P. Morgan building killed thirty and injured 300 persons. These explosions set off nationwide hysteria against terrorism, with Congress demanding action by the Justice Department. The action came in the notorious Palmer Red Raids of 1921, in which 2,500 aliens were arrested on warrants of the Bureau of Immigration. In the end, 446 were deported. The conduct of the raids was protested widely by civil liber-

ties groups. Dissent expressed in violence had its result in the outrageous disregard of the civil rights of many accused persons.

Once the country had recovered from the postwar hysteria of the twenties, there began in the United States, in 1930, and continued until after 1944, an era in which dissent expressed in speech and print enjoyed a freedom not exceeded at any period in this country's history and seldom paralleled at any time or at any place on the globe. Even dissent verging to resistance and disobedience was extended a toleration remarkable for any organized society.

Then, in 1945, commenced a new period with a different climate towards dissent. This time, the violence was not evidenced by indiscriminate terror and bombing, but by acts of espionage—the Rosenberg case, the Hiss case, the Fuchs case—and a host of other events and incidents that set afoot a national atmosphere of fear and apprehension that abetted the repression of the McCarthy era. This time, there were no Palmer raids or similar acts of executive suppression. The intimidatory impulse originated in action by Congress.

### *The Civil Rights Era*

The country finally began to right itself in the early fifties. I think the year 1954 can be noted as the commencement of a new era. It was an era of triumph for dissent—dissent from the repression of local and state laws, customs, mores, and tradition.

In the ensuing decade, dissent, utilizing the spoken and the written word, employ-

ing new varieties of passive resistance and civil disobedience, wrought such a transformation in the discrimination enforced by society upon the victimized Negro minority as seldom has been produced in any country by measures short of outright revolution.

The decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, outlawing racial segregation in public schools, commenced this era on May 17, 1954. Congress added a succession of Civil Rights Acts. The executive departments of the government invoked the military power of the nation to carry this movement forward in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Alabama.

The unique thing about this incredible decade of progress, it seems to me, is the fact that the object of the dissenting words and acts were restrictive, discriminatory, and prejudicial local and state laws, customs, and mores—and that the Federal Government itself was, by its court decisions, its laws, and its national administration, the foremost dissenter.

Then came a succession of acts of violence, beginning with arson and rioting in the Negro neighbourhood of Watts in Los Angeles in the summer of 1965, and followed in succeeding months by violence exploding in the slums of one great city after another. (It is important to distinguish these spontaneous eruptions from anything that might be described as civil disobedience. They were rather irrational outbursts of rage.)

At the same time as the dissent in the cities moved from words to acts, dissent against the war and the draft and campus dissent from college and university policies began to swing from utterance to action.

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Sometimes the three concurrent dissents have merged. What remains to be seen is the effect of dissident extremism this time upon national attitudes towards dissenting opinions and actions.

Comparisons between the level of dissent existing now and that in previous periods when dissenting opinion and acts were widespread is not easy. The dissent from war and conscription is a phenomenon with which the country has had the most experience. And it is clear that, so far, this form of dissent has not reached anything like the levels that existed during the Civil War period and the First World War period, or even the World War II period.

On November 1, 1967, for example, there were 15,621 draft delinquents out of a total registration of 35,881,000. This is a far cry from the level of nearly 300,000 delinquents at the end of World War I. The number and percentage of men who fail to report for induction are substantially lower than during the Korean war.

The disturbances on campuses, on the other hand, are a newer experience for Americans. They are not wholly draft-related, or only draft-related, but no doubt are a complex of all current dissent factors—youth revolt, draft revolt, and civil rights revolt—predominating in different degrees at different times and places. The riots in the cities are also phenomena with which the country has had less prior experience.

### *Lessons of History*

Can we draw any conclusion or discern any general behavioural phenomenon in

this cursory history of American dissent? Can we perfect out of our past experience and current anguish any generalizations about the right and the duty of dissent?

It is my own chief concern that the storm and stress of our American dissents leave intact the freedom to speak and write against the policies of government (or for them). It is perfectly clear that on frequent occasions in the past the curtailment of the freedom to write and speak did take place under constructions of the Constitution that rendered almost imperceptible the line between mere words and acts. We have a right to ask of authority that the distinction between words and acts be kept clear. But our admonitions cannot run to government alone. Citizens, too, have their responsibilities.

Dissent raised from the level of speech and publication to the level of civil disobedience has not enjoyed the same legal or moral sanction as utterance in our society, but some forms of civil disobedience that were gaining this sanction did not include all forms of law evasion or resistance to the law. Nevertheless, American society, in its usual selective way, had derived from Thoreau's germinal essay, "Civil Disobedience," from its practical application by Gandhi and its current employment by Martin Luther King and others, the notion that under certain circumstances civil disobedience is to be countenanced.

Professor Charles L. Black, writing in the *Texas Law Review*, distilled the sense of this prevalent opinion when he wrote: "I would reject as facile and misleading, as altogether destructive of legal order, the notion that no one is obliged to obey

any law he thinks wrong." At the same time, he voiced his "belief that there may be circumstances, going far beyond the simple conviction of injustice, in which such disobedience is both justified and compatible with the general continuance of the legal order."

#### *Ground Rules*

That, I believe, is the level to which opinion in this country had been carried by the period of the civil rights demonstrations in the South. The country had grown to accept as tolerable in our society acts of civil disobedience under some circumstances. Can we define these circumstances? I think the consent of society is conditioned upon:

(1) The existence of an evil of such magnitude as to warrant extraordinary measures.

(2) The absence of any remedy within the law or through ordinary political devices.

(3) The presence in the protested laws involved of an alleged illegal aspect (as in local and state segregation laws in conflict with Federal laws or the Constitution).

(4) The use of methods of disobedience not involving injury to innocent people.

(5) The choice of methods of disobedience not infringing on the acknowledged rights of others.

(6) The probability that the disobedience would achieve a remedy.

(7) The selection of a clearly defined and precise object of the disobedience.

(8) The avoidance of violence.

(9) The purity of the motives of those engaged in acts of civil disobedience.

I think these are the chief criteria with which citizens generally weighed the marches and demonstrations in the South. Acts of civil disobedience that had these characteristics had the most support. Where any of these standards were departed from, support was lessened. External factors had their influence, too. Where authority or opposing groups were provocative or violent, public support for and consent to civil disobedience was heightened.

If I am right, it is quite clear that the public had not extended its indiscriminate endorsement to all acts of civil disobedience. And it is quite clear that the restricted nature of the popular franchise for civil disobedience was not widely understood. Acts of disobedience began to be seen in situations where the substantive evils complained of were minor indeed. They began to be employed before any exertions were made to remedy the situation by ordinary process. They were used against laws burdened by no constitutional infirmity. They were utilized in spite of the threat to the safety of innocent persons.

#### *Student Activists*

There are broadly three groups involved in the United States today in conspicuous dissent, and we need to keep their distinctive characteristics in mind as we weigh both society's proper reaction to them and consider any restrictions upon the forms of dissent that have tradition-

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ally been encouraged and those that have been repressed.

The first of these groups is that made up of students. How large the campus dissent may be is a matter on which observers differ.

James W. Trent and Judith L. Craise of the University of California, after a study of polls and deans' reports, conclude that "the intense political activism observed on some campuses recently is not pervasive and is representative of only a small proportion of college students in the United States; the great majority of students today largely manifest the apathy and conformity that have characterized students of the past, rather than the kind of commitment and autonomy that leads to political activism or serious intellectual involvement."

They cite studies conducted in 1966 and 1967 showing that only a few select students are involved in a few select colleges and universities. One survey in 1966 found no more than 9 per cent activists on these select campuses. Only 35 per cent of the deans of 85 per cent of all colleges reported any activism on international issues. Even at Berkeley only 3 per cent were active enough to risk arrest in the Free Speech Movement.

However general the dissent may be, it is a great deal larger than in recent years and a great deal more given to pushing the means of expressing it to the outside edge of that toleration which orderly societies generally allow.

There are those who think student discontent no new thing, but only a new manifestation of the phenomena of an age group with which society always has had to deal. Eric Hoffer, for example,

thinks we make the mistake of taking the students too seriously and thus encouraging them to take themselves too seriously. There are reasons for their alienation—the shifting values of our times, the constant threat of war, the nagging uncertainties of the draft, the loss of that elan that enshrouded the college student and graduate when he was the elite of his generation.

Towards the dissent of youth the view of society ought to be marked by patience resting on the knowledge that time will repair many of the excesses into which young men are led, that the rest of them can be tolerated until and unless the commotions of a very small minority interfere with the rights of their contemporaries who wish to get an education or the liberties of others who have a right to speak—even though what they say may depart from the given wisdom of dissenting college students.

In any case, the dissenting students stand in a special position, and their dissenting words and acts raise different problems that must be dealt with in a different way.

### *Civil Rights Tactics*

And so, it seems to me, do those who are engaged in a struggle to right the wrongs that for a century have been inflicted upon a racial minority in the United States. Their efforts to express their legitimate discontent, even when it is cast in forms that might be objectionable if resorted to by citizens with a long record of equal rights, must be faced with a toleration born out of understanding. If some Negro militants behave like men

who have not had the discipline and training of long political experience, it is we who have deprived them of that experience and we cannot expect to escape some of the bad consequences of our unenlightened policy.

There is another circumstance in this situation that admonishes the white community to be forbearing, and ought to counsel the Negro community, however justifiably aroused with present injustice, to face the fact that progress in removing the consequences of past injustice must be slow.

Acts of civil disobedience, in the charter I have tried to construct, gain some of their justification out of the possibility that they may result in a redress of injustice. But when acts of civil disobedience are directed at the consequences of historic injustice, they miss the real authors of human misery and often vent their wrath upon the very people who are trying to redeem the situation.

Unfortunately, a country or a people which by a long train of abuses has diminished the opportunities of a class or racial group cannot immediately repair the damage. A man of fifty who lost his opportunity for a decent education forty years ago cannot instantly be made whole and transformed by a tardy act of restitution.

A campaign of civil disobedience directed against nature itself is not likely to produce the repeal of any of its laws. It will be a long time after all current discrimination has been eliminated before the consequences of historic acts of injustice are removed from our midst. The day will not be hastened if the Negro minority, in a fit of understandable im-

patience, resorts to acts of disobedience arising out of sheer frustration, or if the white majority, reacting to such acts and frustration, reverts to misdirected repression and resentment.

#### *Obligations of the Majority*

Those who are not yet adult citizens and those who have suffered from unfair discrimination, in my view, stand on a different ground from that occupied by men and women who always have enjoyed full rights as citizens in our democratic system. Society has a right to apply to its privileged majority groups the theory of the Social Contract. They have enjoyed the fullest rights and privileges. They have assumed as well the obligations and responsibilities that go with those rights and privileges.

As citizens to whom all kinds of political resources have been available, they share responsibility for the policies their country pursues and they cannot wholly separate themselves from the measures they protest. Society justly can hold them to a greater degree of accountability for words or acts that tend towards the disruption of order. They lack that primary grievance of the disenfranchised.

They have enjoyed in the past and still possess in the present the means of redressing grievances, by means short of disobedience. They have had a chance to become a part of the fluctuating majority that governs this nation. They still have a chance to make the minority of which they now are a part a new majority. And if and when they do that they will have a right to ask the new minority to conform, as they have had to conform, to the laws

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and directives of the government apparatus in their hands.

Of these citizens, it seems to me, the government is entitled to ask forms of dissent and disagreement that comply with our traditions—speech within the limits of parliamentary utterance, actions in conformity with laws adopted by due process.

The exact limits on both speech and actions may fluctuate with the occasion, but there surely is a line beyond which such citizens ought not to proceed if they count themselves within the community that does not intend or propose the revolutionary overthrow of this government by force and violence. If they belong to this revolutionary persuasion, none of the limitations we have been discussing apply to them—and neither do any of the rights and immunities which sovereign nations legally withhold from those who intend the destruction of the nation.

Certainty, I suppose, always has been a characteristic of dissenters. Only people completely convinced that they are beyond all doubt wholly right would undertake the difficulties and discomforts of

dissent. It is an attribute that gives force and vigour to dissenters. At the same time, I am afraid that once this stage of certainty is reached, minds close to the witness of new facts and new forces. And, in the fluid world in which we live, this can be a very dangerous thing.

While we concede and defend the right to dissent, it is equally important to acknowledge and support the right to conform. If one is precious to a minority, the other is sacred to a majority. They are not long found singly and separately, but exist in a complementary relationship, the existence of each making more secure the perpetuation of the other. The preservation of both depend upon majorities and minorities extending to each other that decent deference and toleration without which no society can long survive.

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# CONGRESS VS. THE PRESIDENT

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JAMES MAC GREGOR BURNS

EXCITING AND REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS swept the Western world during the late eighteenth century. One of these was that people could govern themselves, that they could dispense with monarchs, dictators, oligarchs, or tyrants and run their own affairs through their own representatives.

The institutional form of this idea was the Congress—a body of locally elected or appointed men who would assemble in a central place, deliberate freely without interference from kings or other authority, and frame wise and benevolent laws for the good of the people.

This idea lay behind the creation of the United States Congress as the central and positive branch of the Government

of the new United States. The framers of the American Constitution, meeting in Philadelphia in 1787, were heirs to John Locke, who had emphasized majority rule and legislative supremacy, on the one hand, and limited government, on the other.

By the terms of Locke's social contract men promised to abide by the decisions of the majority; at the same time, government was limited to the purpose for which it was established. Whenever government became destructive of the inalienable rights of man, it could no longer claim his allegiance.

There was thus a central ambiguity in Locke. This ambiguity was passed on to early American thinkers and was re-

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inforced by the doctrines of another philosopher who influenced the thought of the framers of the Constitution, Montesquieu.

Like Locke, the great French theorist felt that liberty should be secured *against* government; moreover, he proposed a practical means of accomplishing this—the separation of powers. He proposed to check power with power, by giving some authority to the legislature, some to the executive, and some to the judiciary.

The practical experience of the framers fortified their interest in checking power with power. They had long resisted the power of the Crown, as manifested in the authority of royal governors and other “minions” of the King.

The Revolution had in part been a form of resistance to executive authority, and the framers were of no mind to establish a strong new executive, even under a more democratic system of government. But they could not be complacent about legislative authority, for they had seen abuses and failings in this kind of power, too. They also had mixed feelings about judicial authority.

What better solution than to mix and blend governmental power among a host of competing leaders, each holding different powers, each responding to different electorates or constituencies? This was the basic design of the Constitution, and it represented one of the most brilliant and durable examples of political planning in history.

Underlying this theory of government was a theory of *man*—a theory that combined optimism towards the power of the people and their representatives

to govern wisely, with a deep scepticism, even cynicism, which recognized the basically selfish and power-seeking qualities of man. The framers had imbibed Hume's scepticism and Machiavelli's cynicism and Hobbes's realism together with the teaching of Locke and Montesquieu. Their concern was far less to realize life, liberty, and happiness *through* government than to protect those great values *against* government.

### *Divided Powers*

The upshot in Philadelphia in 1787 was a new federal government of limited and divided powers—powers that were carefully circumscribed in order not to encroach on basic powers left to the states and to the people.

Congress was put in a rather ambivalent position. It was the central law-making branch of the national government, but it was left in a competitive relation with a President of rather ambiguous powers but of enormous potential importance; and with a judiciary that was given implicitly the power to hold acts of Congress, as well as actions of the President, unconstitutional.

Still, Congress was to be the keystone of the federal government; in policy-making the President and the judiciary were to be more negative and specialized branches.

The past century has witnessed an interesting reversal in emphasis. The Presidency has become an important source of initiative and planning, of policy and programme, and the federal judiciary has made some historic decisions, especially in the field of civil

rights. Congress has assumed some negative functions—vetoing proposals of the President, investigating activities of the executive department, and sometimes reducing appropriations requested by the Chief Executive.

One reporter notes that Congress has become a kind of continuing and permanent opposition party to the President, any President. This, of course, is an overstatement—for on many notable public issues in such fields as national defence and foreign policy Congress has acted with dispatch as an ally of presidential policies—sometimes to the later chagrin of some members. But it is certainly true that on occasion Congress has moved into a position of critical challenge to executive-sponsored programmes.

The historic causes of this reversal are manifold.

First, most Presidents, beginning with George Washington, have insisted on protecting their executive prerogatives against attempts by Congress to exert administrative controls over at least sections of the bureaucracy. As the Federal bureaucracy has become larger and grown into a vast apparatus, the executive reach of the President has naturally grown, too.

Second, to win and keep office presidential aspirants or incumbents had to build strong party followings, and in doing so they both shaped and maintained a base of political power that sustained them in their altercations with Congress. Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson exemplified this tendency.

Third, the managing of warfare, hot or cold, has greatly enhanced the power

of the President. Abraham Lincoln directed the Northern effort against the South for several months without even calling Congress into session. Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt wielded extensive powers in directing American efforts in the two world wars, and much of the enhanced presidential authority continued, at least in the form of precedent and practice, following the termination of the wars.

#### *Urban Pressures*

The main reason for the reversal of the roles of President and Congress goes beyond even these significant factors. Put oversimply, the President as an institution has responded to the needs and pressures of a complex and growing urban population, while Congress—representing a more conservatively oriented and traditional series of constituencies—has not, or at least not nearly to the same extent. There are three dimensions to this contrast.

In the first place, Congress does not fully represent the urban population, while the President may overrepresent city dwellers. The Senate was established to give all states equal representation regardless of population, and this provision in effect has meant that the less populous rural states, such as Idaho and Vermont, have the same formal representation, two senators, in the upper chamber as do populous urban states like California and New York. This was to be expected and, indeed, was even part of the planning of the founding fathers.

Much more surprising has been the

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shift in representation in the House of Representatives, which was designed to be directly representative of population, large or small. The House has become, many observers feel, even less responsive to urban interests than has the Senate.

There is a natural reason for this seeming paradox. Legislative district lines can never keep pace with the flow of population, even with the best of intentions, and since the flow of population has been essentially from country to city (and now into suburbs), political boundaries are always at least a little out of date. Together with this uncalculated malrepresentation, there has been a good deal of contrived maldistricting of congressional constituencies.

The power to set the boundaries of congressional districts lies in effect with the state legislatures, which are themselves artificially constructed to over-represent rural areas. Although they have the legal opportunity to recistrict at least every ten years, the state legislators are perfectly content to allow urban districts to become two or three times larger than rural ones; hence they greatly deprecate the representation of urban interests in the national House of Representatives.

A recent Supreme Court decision requires that these gross disparities be changed, but it may be some time before all congressional districts are evened up to meet the rough criteria established by the Court.

The Presidency must be far more responsive to urban interests because success in gaining the White House turns on capturing a majority of the electoral votes of the states, and the large states

have almost their proportionate share of these votes.

As a practical matter, the presidential candidates tend to vie for the great urban voting blocks, such as labour, the Negro, and ethnic groups, that are thought to hold the balance of power in the large states, and in doing so make promises and commitments that draw them even farther from the views and policies of congressmen who represent the rural districts.

### *Concentration vs. Fragmentation*

A second reason for the change in the congressional role and the rise of presidential initiative is institutional. Part of the great strength of the Presidency has been the principle that Alexander Hamilton and other framers of the Constitution stressed at the start—the need for single authority, for unity of command, for concentration of power, at least within the executive branch. Congress has become increasingly characterized by multiple leadership and by organizational diversity.

On the face of it, Congress would seem to be organized on party lines, to be characterized by the same leadership of the "ins" and of the "outs" that is found in many other national legislatures, such as the British Parliament.

Both the Senate and the House are organized, visibly as well as behind the scenes, in party groupings, with party labels; the majority party controls the committees and other key institutions and functions; there is the usual apparatus of party leaders, whips, and other traditional elements of party

control. There is an opposition party "with the duty to oppose," and with its own minority party apparatus.

Behind this facade of a two-party system, however, Congress is organized on a highly diffused and factional basis. It operates a multiparty rather than a two-party system.

Power is divided between the elected leaders, such as the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the Senate, on the one hand, and the committee leaders, on the other. The power of the committee leaders is further fragmented because of the multiplicity of committees and subcommittees in both houses. While the thrust of the Presidency is always towards the concentration of power, the drift of Congress is towards the scattering of power among a dozen or so key leaders and among perhaps another hundred secondary leaders.

The device that most effectively fragments congressional policymaking is the committee system combined with the seniority rule. The making of policy in Congress has traditionally been divided among standing committees, many of which have attained great prestige and influence.

Committee chairmanships are allotted on the basis of the famous congressional seniority rule—the man who has had the longest service on the committee becomes chairman, if he belongs to the majority party. Moreover, committee chairmen wield great powers—power to hold meetings or not hold them, power to advance some bills in the committee and to block others, power to influence the management of a committee measure

if and when it reaches the floor of the House or the Senate.

The crucial question is: Into whose hands do committee chairmanships tend to gravitate? The answer is quite clear from American experience.

In general, those men from the more socially stable, conservative, rural areas are the congressmen who face least competition from the opposition party and hence stay in Congress and accumulate seniority and ultimately committee chairmanships. Factually, the conservative rural population of the nation—now far smaller than the urban and suburban population—is substantially overrepresented in the committee structure and thus in the policymaking of Congress.

Seniority is not simply a technical parliamentary rule in Congress; it is a way of life. Not only chairmanships but other political prizes and considerations usually are allotted on the basis of longest service in Congress. Even though committee chairmen do not work in close alliance with one another, they support a system of mutual toleration and mutual assistance.

The younger legislator comes to feel that he must "go along" with his elders in order to "get along." He may be newly elected from an area of keen competition between the two parties; he may feel that he has a mandate from his constituency to propose strong action; he may wish to support a vigorous President who has proposed sweeping measures to Congress. But he also wants to move ahead in influence within the congressional structure, and a tension is often created between his desire to be

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bold and his prudent calculation that he must in part "play the game" according to both formal and informal congressional rules.

### *Weapons of Delay*

A third major reason for the change in congressional role is closely related to the seniority system—namely, the special arrangements in each house that make action difficult. If the executive branch is generally organized to expedite action, basically Congress is organized to slow up, consider, refine, and even block action. The rules of each house, especially the Senate, permit expert parliamentarians to delay or to block action in many ingenious ways, but two procedures in particular play into the hands of those who wish to slow the legislative process.

The most noted of these is the right to filibuster in the Senate. Once a Senator gains the floor, he has the power to go on speaking until he gives up the floor voluntarily or through exhaustion. Debate does not have to be relevant to the subject under consideration; the Senator need only keep talking. If several Senators want to filibuster, they can do so by spelling one another hour after hour—for example, by asking involved questions that enable the speaker to rest.

The only way to end a filibuster is by giving in to the filibusterers, by exhausting them (almost impossible), or by invoking cloture. If two-thirds of the Senators on the floor vote for cloture, no Senator may speak for more than an hour. The Senate has rarely invoked cloture, however, and the filibuster re-

mains a formidable weapon of delay and obstruction in the Senate.

The filibuster has its institutional counterpart in the House of Representatives, the Rules Committee.

Theoretically, the Rules Committee is simply a "traffic officer" that does the vital job of regulating the flow of business to enable the more important bills to receive expeditious handling. Actually, the committee has the power to delay a bill indefinitely and in effect kill it; to substitute a wholly new bill; or to insist that the bill be drastically amended as the price of letting it go on to the House floor.

The Rules Committee also operates under the seniority rule and it is not a representative committee; it is dominated by veteran congressmen who have been re-elected time and time again from "safe" districts regardless of the shifts in national political alignments. In effect, a coalition of conservative Republicans and conservative Democrats—most of them from rural areas—has dominated the Rules Committee in recent decades.

Clearly the hand of tradition lies heavily on the houses of Congress—the hand of the framers, who built a congressional structure that remains little changed, in contrast to the tremendous alterations in both the form and the substance of the Presidency; and the hand of the older, more conservative members from rural districts who oppose vigorous Federal action and use Congress essentially as a means of containing strong Presidents.

To be sure, in recent years—most notably 1968—liberal activist forces in Congress, under the open or quiet

leadership of the President, have been able to break through the hurdles of the Rules Committee and the Senate filibusters. But the very nature of these rare occasions sharpens the issue.

The breakthroughs usually come in the wake of some dramatic crisis, when the whole nation is aroused and the President can mobilize a "crisis consensus." What is needed is steady, farsighted, planned, even programmed action in advance of crisis, to head it off or to minimize it when it comes. This is precisely what the present rules and traditions of Congress prohibit.

### *Procedural Reforms*

Can Congress, then, face up to the needs of a highly complex, constantly changing, and increasingly urbanized America? One answer, of course, is that it has so faced up on many occasions.

The legislative record of the past twenty years indicates some massive responses to the great economic and social needs of urban America: social security, fair labour standards, civil rights, public housing and slum clearance, collective bargaining, depositors insurance, health, welfare, and educational grants—these are but some of the laws passed by Congress to meet the changing needs of American life.

Furthermore, Congress in 1965 moved swiftly in weakening the power of the House Rules Committee to obstruct legislation, thereby opening the way for full House action on the President's programme.

Many Americans, of course, like a sticky Congress; they see in Congress

a check on activist, majoritarian, internationalist, and what some would call "spendthrift" and "radical" Presidents. They would contend that the more Congress waters down and obstructs certain presidential measures, the more it acts as an effective check and balance in our pluralistic society against dangerous and radical majoritarian impulses in both domestic and international fields. The claim here is that we can move safely only if we move slowly.

Such people would oppose any fundamental congressional reform designed to make the national legislature more expeditious and innovative. They might well hold winning cards in any struggle over extensive reform, because many of the congressmen who reflect their views are the ones who hold the strategic positions from which they can deflect any reforms designed to change the operations of Congress. Committee chairmen and their friends can influence procedural reform bills just as they can bottle up substantive measures.

The very procedures that reformers would wish to change—most notably the seniority system and the right to filibuster—are the very procedures that can be used to block such changes or to delay them inordinately.

Another strategy of reform is constitutional amendment. Reformers have favoured proposals to elect members of the House of Representatives every four years, instead of every two years as at present; to limit the terms of Senators to four years; to establish a joint presidential-legislative cabinet including members from both the executive and legislative branches; and possibly

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even to give the President the power of dissolving Congress and compelling the members to run for re-election, in the manner of some parliamentary democracies abroad.

Such reforms are probably overly ambitious and perhaps faulty in concept (for example, the right of dissolution); in any event, major reform of Congress through constitutional amendment could hardly muster the two-thirds vote needed in both houses of Congress, or the necessary support of three-fourths of the state legislatures.

### *Irresistible Force*

If this analysis is correct, what we end up with superficially is another example of the irresistible force and the immovable object. Certainly Congress is an intractable if not an immovable object in the area of self-reform and a slow-moving object in enacting major social and economic legislation. But if we should not minimize the immovability of the object, we must not underestimate either the irresistibility of the force.

The civil rights movement in the United States has acquired tremendous momentum. The crucial question is not whether this force will continue to be exerted, but whether it will be channelled through regular processes of governmental action, or whether it will operate mainly in the streets, in the schools and universities.

We must keep in mind that civil rights is merely one focus of movements for social reform. Allied with it are those policies concerned with the pockets of poverty in the United States, the econ-

omy, education and training, transportation, expanded medical care, and the plight of the cities, embracing a wide range of problems from juvenile delinquency to air pollution. These forces themselves may move Congress to more rapid and positive action.

We have seen some breakthroughs under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, culminating in the fair housing legislation passed early in 1968. Yet as we consider the fantastic pace of social change today, and especially the revolution in political attitudes during the 1960's in churches and ghettos, on campuses and in state capitals, we wonder again whether our governmental institutions are capable of keeping up with, much less mastering, the tumultuous forces throughout the land.

If the forces of change and reform cannot find adequate relief and representation in Congress, they will turn to another agency that historically has been more responsive to the urban, ethnic, racial, trade-union, and consumer-minded population of the United States: the Presidency. Some of the reformers' aims can be realized through direct presidential action.

But the basic domestic issues facing the United States are essentially fiscal; they concern the allocation of resources to the public sector, and their reallocation to public needs, such as social welfare or defence spending.

It is in the allocation of resources to these public needs that the President is most helpless to act alone; here he must gain the consent of Congress. It is precisely here that Congress will be forced by events and by presidential

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leadership to consider anew the appropriate balance between economy, balancing the budget and "protecting the taxpayer's dollar," on the one hand, and the insistent demands of an increasingly complex and urbanized society, on the other.

The existence of friction between the President and Congress on these issues is not surprising; in part it is a result of the checks and balances that the framers of the Constitution established almost two hundred years ago. Most Americans, whatever their specific interests in policy, support the system of checks and balances and the limited government that it sustains.

A change in the basic functions and thrust of Congress would call both for an act of creative imagination by political

leaders, rivalling the boldness of the framers of the Constitution, and for a change in popular attitudes that sustain the present structure of government. The historic and continuing question is whether Congress can continue to protect our taxpayers' pocketbooks at the same time that it plays a positive and constructive role in helping the President to meet the unprecedented needs of mankind at home and abroad.

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PROFESSOR JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS of *Williams College, U.S.A.*, who has written biographies of Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy and several widely discussed books on the structure and operation of the Federal Government, wrote this essay for the *Voice of America Forum*.

# JAMES BALDWIN : EVERYONE KNOWS HIS NAME

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JOSEPH EPSTEIN

JAMES BALDWIN, novelist, essayist, and playwright, is a writer the mainspring of whose talent is essentially autobiographical. Whatever genre he happens to be working in at the moment, he writes almost exclusively out of his own experience, inevitably getting back to himself.

That Baldwin also happens to be a Negro lends his work, indeed his life, an extra measure of relevance—making an acquaintance with it, in fact, indispensable to anyone who would claim even an approach to understanding the experience

of the Negro in America. And, by extension, since black and white in America are immutably locked in one another's arms—whether eventually to end in an embrace of good feeling or a hideous death grip remains the greatest single question facing this nation—so Baldwin's writing is similarly necessary to an understanding of America itself.

James Baldwin has become one of those writers, rare at any time, whom one simply cannot afford to neglect.

Not only does Baldwin's work reflect a

good deal of recent American history, but he has personally been an active participant in this same difficult portion of history. It is because Baldwin is a Negro who is also an intellectual, an artist who has also been an activist, that his autobiography takes on special interest.

It is revealing, I think, that the hero of his most recent novel, *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* (1968), is a successful Negro actor, a telling metaphor for James Baldwin's own role in American life. This novel, Baldwin's first in six years, marks a pause, a self-acknowledged halfway house of sorts in his career. It also provides an excellent occasion to look back on that remarkable career in some detail. By the time he was in his middle twenties, James Baldwin had already achieved what most writers strive a life-time for—a voice of his own, a manner of seeing the world and of writing about it that was at once fresh, vital, and wholly his own.

His earliest published writing possessed an elegance uncommon among writers of any time. It jarred expectations, for American readers had come to expect very different qualities from Negro writing. Vigour, anger, a strong note of protest, these are the most common elements of American Negro writing, and while these elements are not absent from Baldwin's writing, they have rarely, if ever, controlled it.

In a really quite magical way, Baldwin has always somehow managed to get beyond the limits of sociology and indignation and write about the Negro—and his relation to the white world—with a sophistication, force, and humanity few before him have ever achieved.

James Baldwin was born in New York City in 1924. More specifically, he was born and raised in the densely crowded and largely dilapidated section of that city known as Harlem.

"I began plotting novels at about the time I learned to read," he has said. "The story of my childhood is the usual bleak fantasy, and we can dismiss it with the restrained observation that I certainly would not consider living it again. In those days my mother was given to the exasperating and mysterious habit of having babies. As they were born, I took them over with one hand and held a book with the other. The children probably suffered, though they have since been kind enough to deny it, and in this way I read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *A Tale of Two Cities* over and over again; in this way, in fact, I read just about everything I could get my hands on—except the Bible, probably because it was the only book I was encouraged to read."

"Encouraged" would appear to be a grand understatement. The Baldwins were an extremely religious family, and in their household Scripture doubtless often passed for conversation. Baldwin's father was a deacon in one of Harlem's many storefront churches, makeshift affairs which were formed when a group of like-minded neighbours got together to rent an empty store, brought in benches and a pulpit, and began conducting services. Baldwin himself, at the age of fourteen, was a boy preacher in such a church. His first novel, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1952), centres around the spiritual torments of a fourteen-year-old boy who bears many resemblances to the author at that age.

The Harlem preachers Baldwin heard as a boy were perhaps notable above all for their intensity; their sermons were filled with apocalypse and perdition, hellfire and damnation, guilt and repression. Baldwin was not long in shedding these fundamentalist aspects of religion, but he seems never to have lost his sense of religion's imaginative appeal and high excitement. The impact of the Harlem churches even today reverberates in Baldwin's prose, which rings with the mixed resonances of the King James translation of the Bible and the evangelical rhetoric of the storefront preachers.

#### *Father and Son*

An influence of at least equal strength has been Baldwin's father. Certainly the relationship between the boy and his now-dead father ranks—in tension, in complexity, in anguish—with the most complicated father-son relationships on record. Their strong wills collided early on, and it was to be a collision without let-up. Baldwin's father is not only mentioned in a great deal that the son has written, but he looms, spectrally, over almost all his work. There is a strong sense in which Baldwin's development as an artist, his ideas, his very style and stance, have largely been formed in reaction to his father.

The older Baldwin had been a failure, both in the world's terms and in his own. His greatest deficiency, according to his son, was his utter inability to establish contact with people. There was something chilling, something off-putting, about the man. As a preacher, he went from church to smaller, more obscure church. With the

passage of years, according to his son, he "found himself in less and less demand as a minister, and by the time he died none of his friends had come to see him for a long time." He lived out his days under a bleak bitterness of spirit.

The bulk of the older Baldwin's bitterness was directed at whites. When his talented son began to make friends with white schoolmates, the father, with his usual acerbity, argued that he was a fool who was asking for trouble. At the time, Baldwin felt differently. But the pressure from his father persisted:

*In later years, particularly when it began to be clear that this "education" of mine was going to lead me to perdition, he became more explicit and warned me that my white friends in high school were not really my friends and that I would see, when I was older, how white people would do anything to keep a Negro down. Some of them could be nice, he admitted, but none of them were to be trusted and most of them were not even nice. The best thing was to have as little to do with them as possible. I did not feel this way and I was certain, in my innocence, that I never would.*

Baldwin's innocence was soon to be shattered. In 1942, having finished high school, he went to work in a defence plant in New Jersey. It was there he learned that, as he puts it, "to be a Negro meant, precisely, that one was never looked at but was simply at the mercy of the reflexes the colour of one's skin caused in other people."

That year he acquired the set of counter-reflexes which he insists is part of the standard psychological equipment of any Negro who lives in a white society. These counter-reflexes are, in his phrase, a disease, and once this disease is contracted, "one can never really be carefree again, for the fever, without an instant's warning, can recur at any moment. It can wreck more important things than race relations. There is not a Negro alive who does not have this rage in his blood—one has the choice, merely, of living with it consciously or surrendering to it."

#### *Coping with Rage*

How, he asks in his extraordinarily moving essay, "Notes of a Native Son," does one live with this rage, this consuming bitterness? His father, who stood out as a vivid object lesson, could not. Neither, he recognized, could he. But Baldwin's response was the reverse of his father's:

*I knew that . . . bitterness was folly. It was necessary to hold on to the things that mattered . . . The new life mattered; blackness and whiteness did not matter; to believe that they did was to acquiesce in one's own destruction. Hatred, which could destroy so much, never failed to destroy the man who hated and this was an immutable law.*

*It began to seem that one would have to hold in the mind forever two ideas which seemed to be in opposition.*

*The first idea was acceptance, the acceptance, totally without rancour,*

*of life as it is, and men as they are: in the light of this idea it goes without saying that injustice is a commonplace. But this did not mean that one could be complacent, for the second idea was of equal power: that one must never, in one's own life, accept these injustices as commonplace but must fight them with all one's strength. This fight begins, however, in the heart and it now had been laid to my charge to keep my own heart free of hatred and despair.*

The attempt to preserve a balance, however delicate, between these sometimes clashing ideals—the fight against injustice in the world and the fight against encroachments of hatred in one's heart—has given much of Baldwin's writing both an admirable tension and an artistic poise. But the intensely moral aspects of his writing emerged gradually, over a period of years. What first attracted readers to James Baldwin was his immense sophistication, his splendid prose, and his early grasp of some very complex issues.

In one of his very first published essays, "Everybody's Protest Novel," Baldwin attacked Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, perhaps the most famous and efficacious protest novel of all time, on the interesting grounds that it was an artistic failure.

In the same essay, he goes on to say that protest literature as such has definite artistic limitations, for inherent in its nature is a denial of the complexity of human beings, which makes it, ultimately, dehumanizing. As in much else he was to write, Baldwin here insists

that the Negro, like all other men, be granted those qualities in literature that make him resolutely indefinable and unpredictable—the qualities, in short, that make him most human.

*Our humanity is our burden, our life; we need not battle for it: we need only to do what is infinitely more difficult—that is, accept it. The failure of the protest novel lies in its rejection of life, the human being, the denial of his beauty, dread, power, in its insistence that it is his categorization alone which is real and which cannot be transcended.*

#### *Religion and Autobiography*

In his very earliest essays, Baldwin firmly enunciated his commitment as a writer, which was his belief that to describe life in anything less than the totality of its complexity was to deal with it less honestly. His own first novel does not fall far short of his own severely high standards. *Go Tell It on the Mountain* is essentially a religious novel, and it puts one in mind of Henry Adams' remark that religious art can be severely flawed by the least touch of insincerity. *Go Tell It on the Mountain* suffers no such flaw. Published when Baldwin was twenty-eight years old, it possesses considerable narrative grace, great rhetorical intensity, and enormous dignity.

Like much else Baldwin has written, this novel is highly autobiographical. It is, loosely speaking, a family chronicle of sorts, delving back into the past of a Negro family—father, mother, and the father's sister—though in a carefully

ordered and dramatically presented manner, without any of the elaborate individual histories family chronicles usually require.

The novel's action, however, is centred in a single day in the life of John Grimes, the fourteen-year-old son of this Harlem family. John's life, his every thought, is suffused by the religion of his father. It is expected of him, we soon learn, that he will follow his father's calling and become a preacher. But John has his doubts: the palpable world of the here-and-now invades his sanctity.

An early scene shows him fascinated by the sights and smells of Manhattan, with its towers, movie houses, and ambiguous white faces. Nevertheless, his mind is kept on the subject of his own salvation. He is, we are told, awaiting the word of God, waiting for the Lord to lift him up, turn him around, and set his feet on the shining way. Yet he also suspects, fears, that this will never happen, that the Lord knows his thoughts and body to be foul, and that his lot, appropriately, will be everlasting damnation.

When the novel comes to touch on the pasts of John's mother, father, and aunt, we learn that Florence, his aunt, had come up from the South as a young girl, bright and strong, but had lost her sense of life's possibilities when her husband died in France in World War I. She is the only adult in the novel who dares openly criticize her brother's obsessive and tyrannical behaviour towards his family.

Gabriel, her brother and John's father, was wild and free as a young man, but became converted and later turned to

preaching, because of an incident with a young woman he had known years before which had left him guilt-ridden, embittered, insular.

John's mother has her own sad past. Before she met John's father she was in love with a man who was falsely accused of a crime and took his life in a prison cell.

All these people are presented without false pathos and with a fulness of humanity that is extremely impressive in a first novel.

The final section of the novel culminates in the scene that has John writhing on the floor of his church, possessed by the spiritual struggle he imagines God and the Devil to be waging for his soul. Yet instead of finding joy in his salvation, he once again confronts the bleakness of his father's spirit. After leaving the church, "he felt his father behind him. And he felt the March wind rise, striking through his damp clothes, against his salty body. He turned to face his father —he found himself smiling, but his father did not smile. . . . They looked at each other a moment. His mother stood in the doorway, in the long shadows of the hall. 'I'm ready,' John said, 'I'm coming: I'm on my way.'"

#### *The Expatriate*

Baldwin wrote *Go Tell It on the Mountain* in Europe, to which he had expatriated himself at the age of twenty-four. He lived there, mostly in Paris, for nine years. His second novel, *Giovanni's Room* (1956), deals with a group of young expatriates also living in Europe, trying desperately to latch on to solid

relationships, and, presumably through these relationships, to find themselves. It is an interesting novel, but not an entirely successful one. One of the points of interest about it, however, is that all its characters are white; no Negro appears, even in a peripheral way.

Perhaps Baldwin wrote *Giovanni's Room* to prove a point — to himself and to others. Early in his career he was conscious of being typed a Negro writer, which is quite different from a writer who writes about Negroes. "I have not written about being a Negro at such length because I expect that to be my only subject," he has said, "but only because it was the gate I had to unlock before I could hope to write about anything else." Elsewhere he has said: "I don't like people who like me because I'm a Negro; neither do I like people who find in the same accident grounds for contempt. . . . I want to be an honest man and a good writer."

Originally he had left America because he wanted to prevent himself "from becoming merely a Negro; or, even, merely a Negro writer. I wanted to find out in what way the *specialness* of my experience could be made to connect me with other people instead of dividing me from them. In my necessity to find the terms on which my experience could be related to that of others," he goes on to say, ". . . I proved, to my astonishment, to be as American as any Texas G.I.

"And I found my experience was shared by every American writer I knew in Paris. Like me, they had been divorced from their origins, and it turned out to make very little difference that the

origins of white Americans were European and mine were African—they were no more at home in Europe than I was."

Finally, the reason he decided to return to America was that the question he had asked all his life—"Who am I?"—had at last become a personal question, and the answer, he discovered, was to be found only within himself, and in America.

### *Art and Action*

It is doubtful that Baldwin found much time to ponder that question upon his return from Europe in 1959. A lot had happened since he had been away; a lot was happening when he returned; and a lot more was about to happen. It would not be long before the Civil Rights Movement would begin in earnest in America. Baldwin's involvement in that Movement was to be deep indeed, despite the fact that he had once rotted:

*Social affairs are not, generally speaking, the writer's prime concern whether they ought to be or not; it is absolutely necessary that he establish between himself and these affairs a distance which will allow, at least, for clarity, so that before he can look forward in any meaningful sense, he must first be allowed to take a long look back.*

Baldwin was to discover, however, that it was just this "distance" that the pressure of events did not allow him to maintain. With the rise in interest in all things Negro that was one of the side effects of the Civil Rights Movement,

his writing, hitherto rather restricted to an audience of intellectuals, enjoyed a corresponding rise in popularity.

By the time *Nobody Knows My Name*, his second book of essays, appeared, its title was well on its way to becoming a misnomer. From all sides he was asked to lecture, join panels, appear on television. Mass magazines like *Time* and *Life* showed him respectful attention. He had become that gratifying, and yet for a writer simultaneously dangerous, phenomenon—a public person, a figure, a celebrity.

Baldwin's role in the Civil Rights Movement in the early sixties was that of a rallying voice, and one especially effective among the young. Lending himself to this kind of work, Baldwin doubtless responded in the only way it was possible for him, personally, to respond. Yet the role of spokesman for, and to, his people was one charged with ambiguity for him. In *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone*, a book which in at least one of its aspects is about fame and success, Baldwin addresses himself to this ambiguity.

The hero of the novel, a famous Negro actor, is speaking to a rally along with other Negro luminaries, and his thoughts do not seem unlike what Baldwin's own might have been on similar occasions:

*Our differences were reducible to one: I was an artist. This is a very curious condition, and only people who never can become artists have ever imagined themselves as desiring it. It cannot be desired, it can only—with difficulty—be supported, and one of the elements to be supported*

(along with one's own unspeakable terrors) is the envy, rage, and wonder of the world.

Yes, we on the platform were united in our social indignation, united in our affliction, united in our responsibility, united in our necessity to change—well, if not the world, at least the condition of some people in the world: but how different were our visions of the world!

I had never been at home in the world and had become incapable of imagining that I ever would be. I did not want others to endure my estrangement, that was why I was on the platform; yet was it not, at the least, paradoxical that it was only my estrangement which had placed me there?

If the effect of Baldwin's active role in the Civil Rights Movement was at once profound and disturbing to him personally, what was its effect on his writing? The overall impact is not easily judged. Those who feel his political involvement hurt him as a writer could point to *Another Country* (1962), his first novel after his return to America, to help make their case.

This is a novel that seems not so much written as willed, not so much completed as abandoned. It is a seriously flawed book, and its flaw, ironically enough, derives from Baldwin's own self-warning: it has not the proper distance, the essential detachment, between writer and subject which makes for clarity. Its theme is the compelling one that love—and, for that matter, life itself—is not possible so long as people live un-

examined lives governed by artificial (humanly damaging) distinctions.

Yet the novel, which deals with the New York world of jazz musicians, academic intellectuals, and writers, seems more an act of violence than a depiction of it. "Stark," "forceful," "disturbing," are among the adjectives that critics have applied to *Another Country*, and these are adjectives that can cut both ways.

#### *A Powerful Document*

Yet as a counter to those who believed Baldwin's political involvement vitiated his literary work, the following year, 1963, he wrote a long and astonishingly brilliant essay entitled *The Fire Next Time*, which is undoubtedly his masterpiece to date and which has come directly out of this same involvement. Although from time to time Baldwin's future as a novelist has been questioned, his power over the essay has always been complete, and nowhere more so than in *The Fire Next Time*.

"Whatever his ultimate success or failure as a novelist," the critic Irving Howe noted not long after the appearance of this essay, "Baldwin has already secured his place as one of the two or three greatest essayists this country has ever produced. He has brought a new luster to the essay as an art form, a form with possibilities for discursive reflection and concrete drama which makes it a serious competitor to the novel, until recently unchallenged as the dominant literary genre in our time."

*The Fire Next Time* has come to be regarded as a document of the American

Civil Rights Movement—and, hence, as a document in recent American history. Its original publication in the United States was received with every imaginable variety of response. Its impact was perhaps greater than that of any single work of its kind in America in recent years, and rightly so, for the essay reaches heights of passionate exhortation unmatched in modern American writing.

*The Fire Next Time* roughly divides into three sections. In the first, Baldwin covers the by-now familiar terrain of his boyhood in Harlem. He then goes on to describe a situation very similar to that of John Grimes, the hero of *Go Tell It on the Mountain*—which makes us realize once again how heavy is the stamp of autobiography on that novel. In its second section, the essay describes a visit Baldwin paid to Elijah Muhammad, leader of a Negro movement in America which has adopted a peculiar version of the Islamic religion, calls for Negro separatism, and preaches that whites all over the world are doomed.

He met the renowned Elijah, who had awarded himself the status of prophet, and was introduced to the young men and women who had gathered around Elijah as disciples. The conversation at dinner, though quiet and well mannered, was also painful.

Baldwin sensed that Elijah and his followers were certain he belonged to them, though he himself, a loner by temperament, felt very differently. And yet, he realizes, how could they not feel he belonged with them? "For where else could I go? I was black, and therefore a part of Islam, and would be saved

from the holocaust awaiting the white world whether I would or no. My weak, deluded scruples could avail nothing against the iron word of the prophet."

And then he told Elijah, "I love a few people and they love me and some of them are white, and isn't love more important than colour?" Elijah returned only a look of affectionate pity, as one might look upon a benighted child.

Baldwin then turns to an analysis of Elijah Muhammad's movement, dissecting its ideas and notions, treating it as both symptom and disease. He finally rejects it entirely and delivers an impassioned, though controlled, sermon to all his countrymen. The United States, as a nation, perhaps has never before been so thunderously, passionately criticized as it is in the last section of *The Fire Next Time*.

#### *America and the Negro*

We are living in an age of rapid and dramatic change, he tells us. He then goes on to state his belief that America is the only Western nation with both the power and the experience to make these changes permanent and meaningful, and to minimize the human damage in the process. But America cannot take its proper place, he believes, because it refuses to face reality, and the reality he has in mind is his conviction that life is tragic. It is also the reality of the Negro.

*What it comes to is that if we, who can scarcely be considered a white nation, persist in thinking of ourselves as one, we condemn ourselves,*

*with the truly white nations, to sterility and decay, whereas if we could accept ourselves as we are, we might bring new life to the Western achievements, and transform them.*

*The price of this transformation is the unconditional freedom of the Negro; it is not too much to say that he . . . must now be embraced, and at no matter what psychic or social risk. He is the key figure in his country, and the American future is precisely as bright or dark as his.*

"In short," he continues, "we, the black and the white, deeply need each other here if we are really to become a nation—if we are really, that is, to achieve our identity, our maturity as men and women."

The only way to achieve this, he feels, is to jettison, once and for all, every single one of our delusions—"and the value placed on the colour of the skin is always and everywhere and forever a delusion. I know that what I am asking is impossible. But in our time, as in every time, the impossible is the least that one can demand—and one is, after all, emboldened by the spectacle of human history in general, and American Negro history in particular, for it testifies to nothing less than the perpetual achievement of the impossible."

Here, without interruption, is the note on which this passionate book ends:

*And here we are, at the centre of the arc, trapped in the gaudiest, most valuable, and most improbable water wheel the world has ever seen. Everything, now, we must assume, is in our*

*hands; we have no right to assume otherwise.*

*If we—and now I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of the others—do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world. If we do not now dare everything, the fulfilment of that prophecy, recreated from the Bible in song by a slave, is upon us: God gave Noah the rainbow sign, No more water, the fire next time!*

#### *A Complex Fate*

Not long after *The Fire Next Time* appeared, Baldwin again left America to live abroad. The rhythm of his talent seems to beat with extraordinary intensity over short concentrated periods, finally exhausts itself, and then, after rest, miraculously begins to regenerate once again. The rest-and-regeneration phase evidently works best for him abroad.

"It is a complex fate to be an American," the novelist Henry James wrote, and James Baldwin, perhaps foremost among contemporary writers, has the keenest appreciation of this statement. *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is on precisely this subject, with a couple of added twists: the complexity of the fate of being an artist and a Negro and an American at once.

As *Go Tell It on the Mountain* can be read as a book about Baldwin's boyhood,

so might *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* be read as part of the story of his youthful struggle to escape a cruel destiny by becoming an artist. It is probably best not to press these autobiographical correspondences too far, yet there is, nevertheless, a strong sense in which this latest of Baldwin's novels is a summary of his life and mind at mid-career.

The hero of *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is Leo Proudhammer, a name suggesting both pride and force. As the novel begins, Proudhammer, a successful Negro actor, suffers a heart attack on stage during a performance in San Francisco. The novel retells his recovery and, more importantly, through a series of carefully interwoven flashbacks, how he achieved his success, what he has had to pay for it, and his view of his own future.

Structurally and stylistically, the book once again establishes Baldwin's craftsmanship as a novelist, for *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* is a novel very free, very well written, and finally very carefully controlled throughout.

The first of the novel's flashbacks goes back to Leo Proudhammer's boyhood in Harlem. It is done with great vividness and beauty of a nostalgic, bittersweet kind. It is especially powerful on the subject of the young Leo's first consciousness of his own colour and of the human divide between black and white. The white people, Leo Proudhammer notes of his childhood, "fascinated me more than the coloured people did because I knew nothing at all about them and could not imagine what they were like . . . I wondered why people

called them white—they certainly were not white."

As the boy grows older, and his consciousness of the human cost of colour grows commensurately—he sees this cost in the rage of his father, the sadness of his mother, the tension and anger in his brother Caleb—he asks his brother: "Caleb, are white people people?"

As the details of his past build up, a picture of Leo Proudhammer begins to develop. He is a man of intense pride—"My pride became my affliction," he remarks at one point. Also a man of iron determination: "Whoever went under, it was not going to be me—and I seem to have been very clear about this from the very beginning of my life. To run meant to turn my back—on lions; to run meant the flying tackle which would bring me down; and, anyway, run where?"

But perhaps the most essential facts about Leo Proudhammer, facts which derive directly from racial division, are his rage and his pain. Not only do they inevitably define him, they also set him a question of the most serious magnitude: Does one allow his rage and pain to destroy him as, given free rein, it invariably will; or can it instead be put to one's service? "My pain," he concludes, "was the horse that I must learn to ride."

That is Leo Proudhammer, but it might as well be James Baldwin. And when Leo Proudhammer talks about his relationship with America and with white Americans, he seems also to be describing Baldwin's own relationship as well: "I was part of these people, no

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matter how bitterly I judged them. I would never be able to leave this country. I could only leave it briefly, like a drowning man coming up for air."

Here one is reminded of another remark of Baldwin's, this time when he said: "I love America more than any other country in the world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually."

In all his writing Baldwin exercises this right with great passion, and in most of it with consummate artistry. And though he long ago achieved the stature and influence most writers strive a lifetime for, he is still restless, experimenting, always critical, hard on his fellow Americans, and not least on himself.

As *Tell Me How Long the Train's Been Gone* comes to its conclusion, Leo Proudhammer, recovered from his heart attack, tells us he is "standing in the wings again, waiting for my cue." So might we picture James Baldwin waiting for his. When it will come is difficult to say, but when it does, this much is certain: he will again be brilliant and stirring and, like all important artists, leave us different from what we were before we came to him.

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JOSEPH EPSTEIN, *contributor of essays and reviews to well-known journals such as "Commentary," "The New Republic," and "Book World," wrote this essay for "Dialogue" Vol. I, No. 3.*

# PROTEAN MAN

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ROBERT JAY LIFTON

I SHOULD LIKE TO EXAMINE a set of psychological patterns characteristic of contemporary life, which are creating a new kind of man—a “protean man.” As my stress is upon change and flux, I shall not speak much of “character” and “personality,” both of which suggest fixity and permanence. I use the term “self-process” to convey the idea of flow. If we understand the self to be the person’s symbol of his own organism, then self-process refers to the continuous psychic recreation of that symbol.

I came to this emphasis through work in cultures far removed from my own, studies of young (and not so young)

Chinese and Japanese. Observations I was able to make in America also led me to the conviction that a very general process was taking place.

I do not mean to suggest that everybody is becoming the same, or that a totally new “world-self” is taking shape. But I am convinced that a new style of self-process is emerging everywhere. It derives from the interplay of three factors responsible for human behaviour: the psychological and biological potential common to all mankind at any moment in time; those traits given special emphasis in a particular cultural tradition; and those related to modern (and particularly contemporary) historical forces. My thesis is that this third factor plays

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an increasingly important part in shaping self-process.

### *A Chinese Youth's Journey*

My work with Chinese was done in Hong Kong, in connection with a study of the process of "thought reform" (or "brainwashing") as conducted on the mainland. I found that Chinese intellectuals of varying ages, whatever their experience with thought reform itself, had gone through an extraordinary set of what I at that time called identity fragments—of combinations of belief and emotional involvement—each of which they could readily abandon in favour of another.

I remember particularly the profound impression made upon me by the extraordinary history of one young man:

beginning as a "filial son" or "young master," that elite status of an only son in an upper-class Chinese family; then feeling himself an abandoned and betrayed victim, as traditional forms collapsed during civil war and general chaos;

then a "student activist" in rebellion against the traditional culture in which he had been so recently immersed (as well as against the Nationalist Regime);

leading him to Marxism and to strong emotional involvement in the Communist movement;

then, because of remaining "imperfections," becoming a participant in a thought reform programme for a more complete ideological conversion; but which, in his case, had the opposite effect, alienating him, so he came into

conflict with the reformers and fled the country;

then, in Hong Kong, struggling to establish himself as an "anti-Communist writer";

after a variety of difficulties, finding solace and meaning in becoming a Protestant convert; and following that, still just thirty, apparently poised for some new internal (and perhaps external) move.

### *A Japanese Transformation*

Even more dramatic were the shifts in self-process of a young Japanese whom I interviewed in Tokyo and Kyoto from 1960 to 1962. I mention one in particular as an extreme example of this protean pattern, though there were many others who in various ways resembled him. Before the age of twenty-five he had been all of the following:

a proper middle-class Japanese boy, brought up in a professional family within a well-established framework of dependency and obligation;

then, due to extensive contact with farmers' and fishermen's sons brought about by wartime evacuation, a "country boy" who was to retain what he described as a lifelong attraction to the tastes of the common man;

then, a fiery young patriot who "hated the Americans";

then after Japan's surrender, curious about rather than hostile towards American soldiers;

soon an eager young exponent of democracy, caught up in the "democ-

racy boom" which swept Japan; at the same time, a youthful devotee of traditional Japanese arts—old novels, Chinese poems, kabuki, and flower arrangement;

during junior high and high school, an all-round leader, outstanding in studies, student self-government, and general social and athletic activities; almost simultaneously, an outspoken critic of society at large and of fellow students in particular for their narrow careerism, on the basis of Marxist ideas current in Japanese intellectual circles; yet also an English-speaking student, which meant having strong interest in things American;

then, midway through high school, experiencing what he called a "kind of neurosis" in which he lost interest in everything he was doing and, in quest of a "change in mood," became an exchange student for one year at an American high school; became a convert to many aspects of American life, including actually being baptized as a Christian and returned to Japan only reluctantly;

as a "returnee," found himself in many ways at odds with his friends; therefore reimmersed himself in "Japanese" experience—sitting on *tatami*, indulging in quiet, melancholy moods, drinking tea, and so on;

then sought admission to Tokyo University, but, once admitted, became an enthusiastic *Zengakuren* activist, with full embrace of its ideal of "pure communism" and a profound sense of fulfilment in taking part in the planning and carrying out of student demonstrations; but when

offered a high position in the organization during his junior year, abruptly became an ex-*Zengakuren* activist by resigning, because he felt he was not suited for "the life of a revolutionary";

then an aimless dissipater, as he drifted into a pattern of heavy drinking, marathon mah-jongg games, and affairs with bargirls;

but when the time came, embarked on the life of a young executive in one of Japan's mammoth industrial organizations—in fact did so with eagerness, careful preparation, and relief; but, at the same time, had fantasies and dreams of kicking over the traces, sometimes violently, and embarking upon a world tour (largely Hollywood inspired) of pleasure-seeking.

There are, of course, important differences between the protean life styles of the two young men, and between them and their American counterparts—differences which have to do with cultural emphases and which contribute to what is generally called national character. But such is the intensity of the shared aspects of historical experience that contemporary Chinese, Japanese, and American self-process turn out to have striking points of convergence.

#### *Dislocation and Imagery*

I would stress two historical developments as having special importance for creating protean man. The first is, the worldwide sense of what I have called *historical dislocation*, the break in the sense of connection which men have long felt with the vital and nourishing symbols

of their cultural tradition—symbols revolving around family, idea systems, religions, and the life cycle in general. In our contemporary world one perceives these traditional symbols as irrelevant, burdensome, or inactivating, and yet one cannot avoid carrying them within or having one's self-process profoundly affected by them.

The second large historical tendency is the *flooding of imagery* produced by the extraordinary flow of postmodern cultural influences over mass communication networks. These cross readily over local and national boundaries, and permit each individual to be touched by everything. But, at the same time, they cause him to be overwhelmed by superficial messages and undigested cultural elements, by headlines and by endless partial alternatives in every sphere of life. These alternatives, moreover, are universally and simultaneously shared—if not as courses of action, at least in the form of significant inner imagery.

We know from Greek mythology that Proteus was able to change his shape with relative ease—from wild boar to lion to dragon to fire to flood. But what he did find difficult, and would not do unless seized and chained, was to commit himself to a single form, the form most his own, and carry out his function of prophecy. We can say the same of protean man, but we must keep in mind his possibilities as well as his difficulties.

The protean style of self-process, then, is characterized by an interminable series of experiments and explorations—some shallow, some profound—each of which may be readily abandoned in favour of still new psychological quests.

This style extends to all areas of human experience—to political as well as sexual behaviour, to the holding and promulgating of ideas, and to the general organization of lives.

#### *The Protean Style in Western Literature*

I would like to suggest a few illustrations of the protean style, as expressed this time in America and Europe, drawn from observations on various forms of literature and art.

In contemporary American literature, Saul Bellow is notable for the protean men he has created. In *The Adventures of Augie March*, one of his earlier novels, we meet a picaresque hero with a notable talent for adapting himself to divergent social worlds. Augie himself says: "I touched all sides, and nobody knew where I belonged. I had no good idea of that myself."

And a perceptive young English critic, Tony Tanner, tells us: "Augie indeed celebrates the self, but he can find nothing to do with it." Tanner goes on to describe Bellow's more recent protean hero, Herzog, as "a representative modern intelligence, swamped with ideas, metaphysics, and values, and surrounded by messy facts. It labours to cope with them all."

A distinguished French literary spokesman for the protean style—in his life and in his work—is of course Jean-Paul Sartre. Indeed, I believe that it is precisely because of these protean traits that Sartre strikes us as such an embodiment of twentieth-century man. An American critic, Theodore Solotaroff, speaks of Sartre's fundamental assump-

tion that "there is no such thing as even a relatively fixed sense of self, ego, or identity—rather there is only the subjective mind in motion in relationship to that which it confronts."

What has disappeared—in Sartre and in protean man in general—is the *classic* superego, the internalization of clearly defined criteria of right and wrong transmitted within a particular culture by parents to their children. Protean man requires freedom from precisely that kind of superego—he requires a symbolic fatherlessness—in order to carry out his explorations. But rather than being free of guilt, we shall see that his guilt takes on a different form from that of his predecessors.

There are many other representations of protean man among contemporary novelists: in the constant internal and external motion of "beat generation" writings, such as Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*; in the novels of a gifted successor to that generation, J. P. Donleavy, particularly *The Ginger Man*; and of course in the work of European novelists such as Guenter Grass, whose *The Tin Drum* is a breathtaking evocation of prewar Polish-German, wartime German, and postwar German environments, in which the protagonist combines protean adaptability with a kind of perpetual physicalmental "strike" against any change at all.

#### *Accent on Innovation*

In the visual arts, one of the most important postwar movements has been aptly named "action painting" to convey its stress upon process rather than fixed completion. And a more recent and

related movement in sculpture, called Kinetic Art, goes further. According to Jean Tinguely, one of its leading practitioners, "artists are putting themselves in rhythm with their time, in contact with their epic, especially with permanent and perpetual movement."

As revolutionary as any style or approach is the stress upon innovation per se which now dominates painting. I have frequently heard artists, themselves considered radical innovators, complain bitterly of the current standards dictating that "innovation is all," and of a turnover in art movements so rapid as to discourage the idea of holding still long enough to develop a particular style.

John Cage, the composer, is an extreme exponent of the protean style, both in his music and in his sense of all of us as listeners. He concluded a recent letter to New York's *Village Voice* with the sentence: "Nowadays, everything happens at once and our souls are conveniently electronic, omni-attentive." The comment is McLuhan-like, but what I wish to stress particularly is the idea of omni-attention—the sense of contemporary man as having the possibility of "receiving" and "taking in" everything. In attending, as in being, nothing is "off limits."

To be sure, one can observe in contemporary man a tendency which seems to be precisely the opposite of the protean style. I refer to the closing off of identity or constriction of self-process, to a straight-and-narrow specialization in psychological as well as in intellectual life, and to reluctance to let in any "extraneous" influences.

But I would emphasize that where this kind of constricted or "one-dimensional" self-process exists, it has an essentially reactive and compensatory quality. In this it differs from earlier characterological styles it may seem to resemble (such as the "inner-directed" man described by Professor David Riesman, in *The Lonely Crowd*, and still earlier patterns in traditional society). For these were direct outgrowths of societies which then existed, and in harmony with those societies, while at the present time a constricted self-process requires continuous "psychological work" to fend off protean influences which are always abroad.

### *The Hunger for Ideology*

Protean man has a particular relationship to the holding of ideas which has, I believe, great significance for the politics, religion, and general intellectual life of the future. For just as elements of the self can be experimented with and readily altered, so can idea systems and ideologies be embraced, modified, let go of and re-embraced, all with a new ease that stands in sharp contrast to the inner struggle we have in the past associated with these shifts.

In one sense, this tendency is related to "the end of ideology" spoken of by Daniel Bell, since protean man is incapable of enduring an unquestioning allegiance to the large ideologies and utopian thought of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

One must be cautious about speaking of the end of anything, however, especially ideology, and one also encounters in

protean man what I would call strong ideological hunger. He is starved for ideas and feeling that can give coherence to this world, but here, too, his taste is towards new combinations. While he is by no means without yearning for the absolute, what he finds most acceptable are images of a more fragmentary nature than those of the ideologies of the past; and these images, although limited and often fleeting, can have great influence upon his psychological life.

Thus political and religious movements, as they confront protean man, are likely to experience less difficulty in convincing him to alter previous convictions than in providing him a set of beliefs which can command his allegiance for more than a brief experimental interlude.

### *A Sense of Absurdity*

Intimately bound up with his flux in emotions and beliefs is a profound inner sense of absurdity, which finds expression in a tone of mockery. The sense and the tone are related to a perception of surrounding activities and belief as profoundly strange and inappropriate.

They stem from a breakdown in the relationship between inner and outer worlds—that is, in the sense of symbolic integrity—and are part of the pattern of historical dislocation I mentioned earlier. For if we view man as primarily a symbol-forming organism, we must recognize that he has constant need of a meaningful inner formulation of self and world in which his own actions, and even his impulses, have some kind of "fit" with the "outside" as he perceives it.

The sense of absurdity, of course, has a considerable modern tradition, and has been discussed by such writers as Camus as a function of man's spiritual homelessness and inability to find any meaning in traditional belief systems. But absurdity and mockery have taken much more extreme form in the post-World War II world, and have in fact become a prominent part of a universal life style.

In American life, absurdity and mockery are everywhere. Perhaps their most vivid expression can be found in such areas as Pop Art and the more general burgeoning of "pop culture." Important here is the complex stance of the pop artist towards the objects he depicts.

On the one hand, he embraces the materials of the everyday world, celebrates and even exalts them—boldly asserting his creative return to representational art (in active rebellion against the previously reigning non-objective school), and his psychological return to the "real world" of *things*. On the other hand, everything he touches he mocks. "Thingness" is pressed to the point of caricature. He is indeed artistically reborn as he moves freely among the physical and symbolic materials of his environment, but mockery is his birth certificate and his passport.

#### *The Literature of Mockery*

A similar spirit seems to pervade literature and social action alike. What is best termed a "literature of mockery" has come to dominate fiction and other forms of writing on an international scale. Again Guenter Grass's *The Tin*

*Drum* comes to mind, and is probably the greatest single example of this literature—a work, I believe, which will eventually be appreciated as much as a general evocation of contemporary man as of the particular German experience with Nazism.

In this country the divergent group of novelists known as "black humorists" also fit into the general category—related as they are to a trend in the American literary consciousness which R. W. B. Lewis has called a "savagely comical apocalypse" or a "new kind of ironic literary form and disturbing vision, the joining of the dark thread of apocalypse with the nervous detonations of satiric laughter." For it is precisely death itself, and particularly threats of the contemporary apocalypse, that protean man ultimately mocks.

The relationship of mockery to political and social action has been less apparent, but is, I would claim, equally significant. There is more than coincidence in the fact that the largest American student uprising of recent decades, the Berkeley Free Speech Movement of 1965, was followed immediately by a "Dirty Speech Movement." While the object of the Dirty Speech Movement—achieving free expression of forbidden language, particularly of four-letter words—can be viewed as a serious one, the predominant effect, even in the matter of names, was that of a mocking caricature of the movement which preceded it.

But if mockery can undermine protest, it can also enliven it. There have been signs of craving for it in major American expressions of protest, such as the Negro

movement and the opposition to the war in Vietnam. A certain chord has been struck in the former by the Negro comedian Dick Gregory, and in the latter by the use of satirical skits and parodies, that revives the flagging attention of protesters becoming gradually bored with the repetition of their "straight" slogans and goals.

And on an international scale, I would say that, during the past decade, Russian intellectual life has been enriched by a leavening spirit of mockery—against which the Chinese leaders are now, in the extremes of their "Cultural Revolution," fighting a vigorous but ultimately losing battle.

#### *Science: Liberator or Destroyer?*

Technology (and technique in general), together with science, have special significance for protean man. Technical achievement of any kind can be strongly embraced to combat inner tendencies towards diffusion, and to transcend feelings of absurdity.

The image of science itself, however, as the ultimate power behind technology and, to a considerable extent, behind contemporary thought in general, becomes much more difficult to cope with. Only in certain underdeveloped countries can one find, in relatively pure form, those expectations of scientific-utopian deliverance from all human want and conflict which were characteristic of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western thought.

Protean man retains much of this utopian imagery, but he finds it increasingly undermined by massive disillusion-

ment. More and more he calls forth the other side of the God-devil polarity generally applied to science, and sees it as a purveyor of total destructiveness.

This profound ambivalence creates for him the most extreme psychic paradox: the very force he still feels to be his liberator from the heavy burdens of past irrationality also threatens him with absolute annihilation, even extinction. But this paradox may well be—in fact, I believe, already has been—the source of imaginative efforts to achieve new relationships between science and man, and, indeed, new visions of science itself.

I suggested before that protean man was not free of guilt. He indeed suffers from it considerably, but often without awareness of what is causing his suffering. For his is a form of hidden guilt: a vague but persistent kind of self-condemnation related to the symbolic disharmonies I have described, a sense of having no outlet for his loyalties and no symbolic structure for his achievements.

This is the guilt of social breakdown, and it includes various forms of historical and racial guilt experienced by whole nations and peoples, both by the privileged and the abused. Rather than a clear feeling of evil or sinfulness, it takes the form of a nagging sense of unworthiness all the more troublesome for its lack of clear origin.

Protean man experiences similarly vague constellations of anxiety and resentment. Often feeling himself uncared for, even abandoned, he responds with diffuse fear and anger. But he can find neither a good cause for the former,

nor a consistent target for the latter. He, nonetheless, cultivates his anger because he finds it more serviceable than anxiety, because there are plenty of targets of one kind or another beckoning, and because even moving targets are better than none. His difficulty is that focused indignation is as hard for him to sustain as is any single identification or conviction.

### *Change and Immortality*

Involved in all of these patterns is a profound psychic struggle with the idea of change itself. For here, too, protean man finds himself ambivalent in the extreme. He is profoundly attracted to the idea of making all things, including himself, totally new—to the "mode of transformation." But he is equally drawn to an image of a mythical past of perfect harmony and prescientific wholeness, to the "mode of restoration." Beneath his transformationism is nostalgia, and beneath his restorationism is his fascinated attraction to contemporary forms and symbols.

In the constant balancing of these elements amidst the extraordinarily rapid change surrounding his own life, his nostalgia can be one of protean man's most explosive and dangerous emotions.

This longing for a "Golden Age" of absolute oneness, prior to individual and cultural separation or delineation, not only sets the tone for the restorativism of the politically Rightist antagonists of history: the still-extant Emperor-worshipping assassins in Japan, the Colons in France, and the John Birchites and Ku Klux Klanners in the United

States. It also, in more disguised form, energizes that transformationist totalism of the Left which courts violence, and is even willing to risk nuclear violence, in a similarly elusive quest.

The protean style undermines the symbolism of transition within the life cycle—the rites of passage surrounding birth, entry into adulthood, marriage, and death. Whatever rites remain seem shallow, inappropriate, fragmentary. Protean man cannot take them seriously, and often seeks to improvise new ones with whatever contemporary materials he has available, including cars and drugs.

Perhaps the central impairment here is that of symbolic immortality—of the universal need for imagery of connection predating and extending beyond the individual life span, whether the idiom of this immortality is biological (living on through children and grandchildren), theological (through a life after death), natural (*in* nature itself which outlasts all), or creative (through what man makes and does).

I have suggested elsewhere that this sense of immortality is a fundamental component of ordinary psychic life, and that it is now being profoundly threatened: by simple historical velocity, which subverts the idioms (notably the theological) in which it has traditionally been maintained; and, of particular importance to protean man, by the existence of nuclear weapons, which, even without being used, call into question all modes of immortality. (Who can be certain of living on through children and grandchildren, through teachings or kindnesses?)

Protean man is left with two paths to symbolic immortality which he tries to cultivate, sometimes pleasurable and sometimes desperately. One is the natural mode we have mentioned. His attraction to nature and concern at its desecration has to do with an unconscious sense that, in whatever holocaust, at least nature will endure—though such are the dimensions of our present weapons that he cannot be absolutely certain even of this.

His second path may be termed that of "experiential transcendence"—of seeking a sense of immortality in the way that mystics always have, through psychic experience of such great intensity that time and death are, in effect, eliminated.

#### *The Quest for Renewal*

We have seen that young adults individually, and youth movements collectively, express most vividly the psychological themes of protean man. And although it is true that these themes make contact with what we sometimes call the "psychology of adolescence," we err badly if we overlook their expression in all age groups and dismiss them as "mere adolescent phenomena."

Rather, protean man's affinity for the young—his being metaphorically and psychologically so young in spirit—has

to do with his never-ceasing quest for imagery of rebirth. He seeks such imagery from all sources: from ideas, techniques, religious and political systems, mass movements, and drugs; or from special individuals of his own kind whom he sees as possessing that problematic gift of his namesake, the ancient Greek god Proteus: the gift of prophecy.

The dangers inherent in the quest seem hardly to require emphasis. What perhaps needs most to be kept in mind is the general principle that renewal on a large scale cannot be achieved without forays into danger, destruction, and negativity. The principle of "death and rebirth" is as valid psychologically as it is mythologically. However misguided many of his forays may be, protean man also carries with him an extraordinary range of possibility for man's betterment, or, more important, for his survival.

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PROFESSOR ROBERT JAY LIFTON, *research psychiatrist at Yale University, has been particularly concerned with the relationship between individual psychology and historical change. His publications include "Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism: A Study of 'Brainwashing' in China," "Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima," and "Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution."*

# STONE RUBBINGS OF MARTHA CALDWELL

THE PHOTOGRAPHS on the following pages depict some of the stone rubbings which Martha Caldwell made in the 1960's when her husband was American Consul in Madras. Her Indian collection of rubbings, which has been exhibited at the National Museum in New Delhi and in Madras and Mysore States (and possibly elsewhere in India by the time this magazine appears), is to be given to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., to enable Americans to visualize more of the artistry of India.

Close examination of the photographs will show that nowhere does her name appear. Asked about this, she said that she was "only" a precise copyist, not the creative artist who carved the stones.

From her view, that her work entails serious craftsmanship and painful hours crouching or reaching in hot sun and blowing sand is not what matters. Making available views of not easily accessible sculptures does matter.

## *The Method*

The rubbings are made by the dry technique, the only technique which should ever be allowed to "rubbers" in any country, because it is the one technique which cannot harm the original.

Rubbing is an ancient craft and today has special significance when used on those carvings in low relief which often are too worn by time for the eye to see clearly or the camera to photograph effectively but which, through rubbing, can be retrieved for the contemporary viewer.

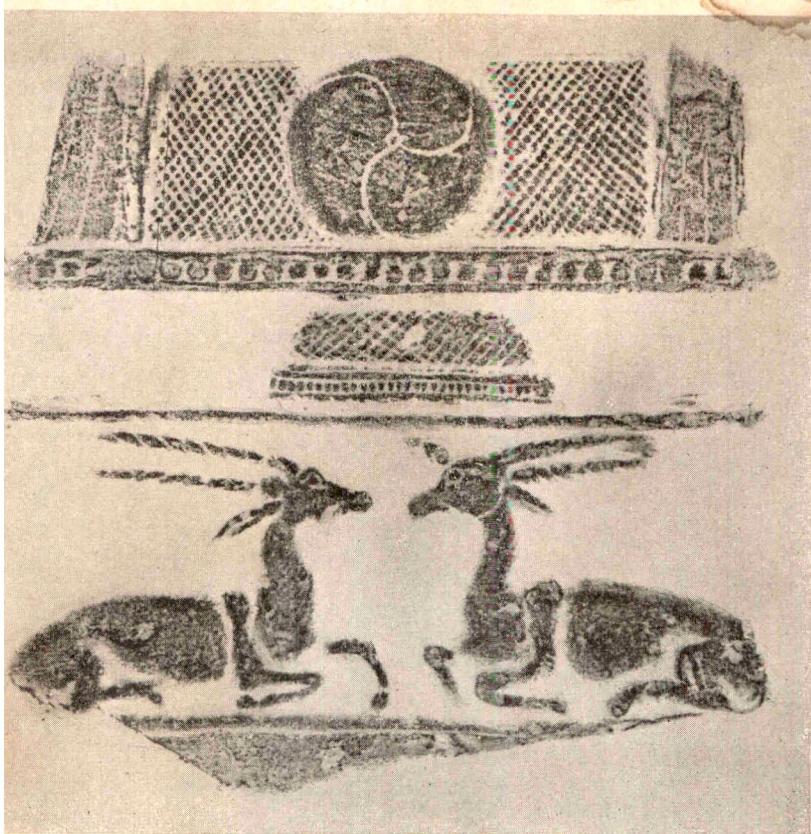
All that are needed to make rubbings like Mrs. Caldwell's are rice paper of a thin, tough quality, ordinary oil paint available almost anywhere, a piece of soft cloth to spread the paint, masking tape to affix the paper tautly to the carving in a way that can cause no damage to the stone on removal, patience, and a skill that comes from sensitivity and practice.

Interested and gifted citizens, working under the direction of their museums and temples, could create invaluable collections for the art historians of India and all the world from the low relief treasures of India. (Ed.)

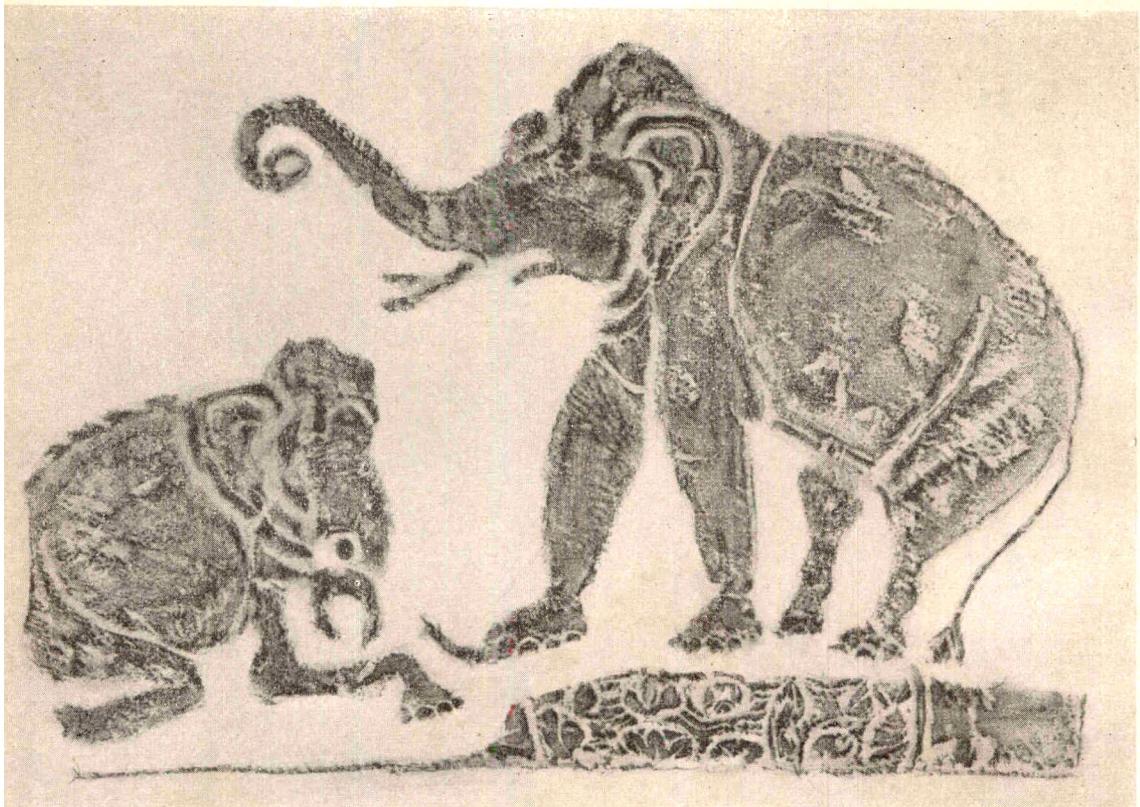


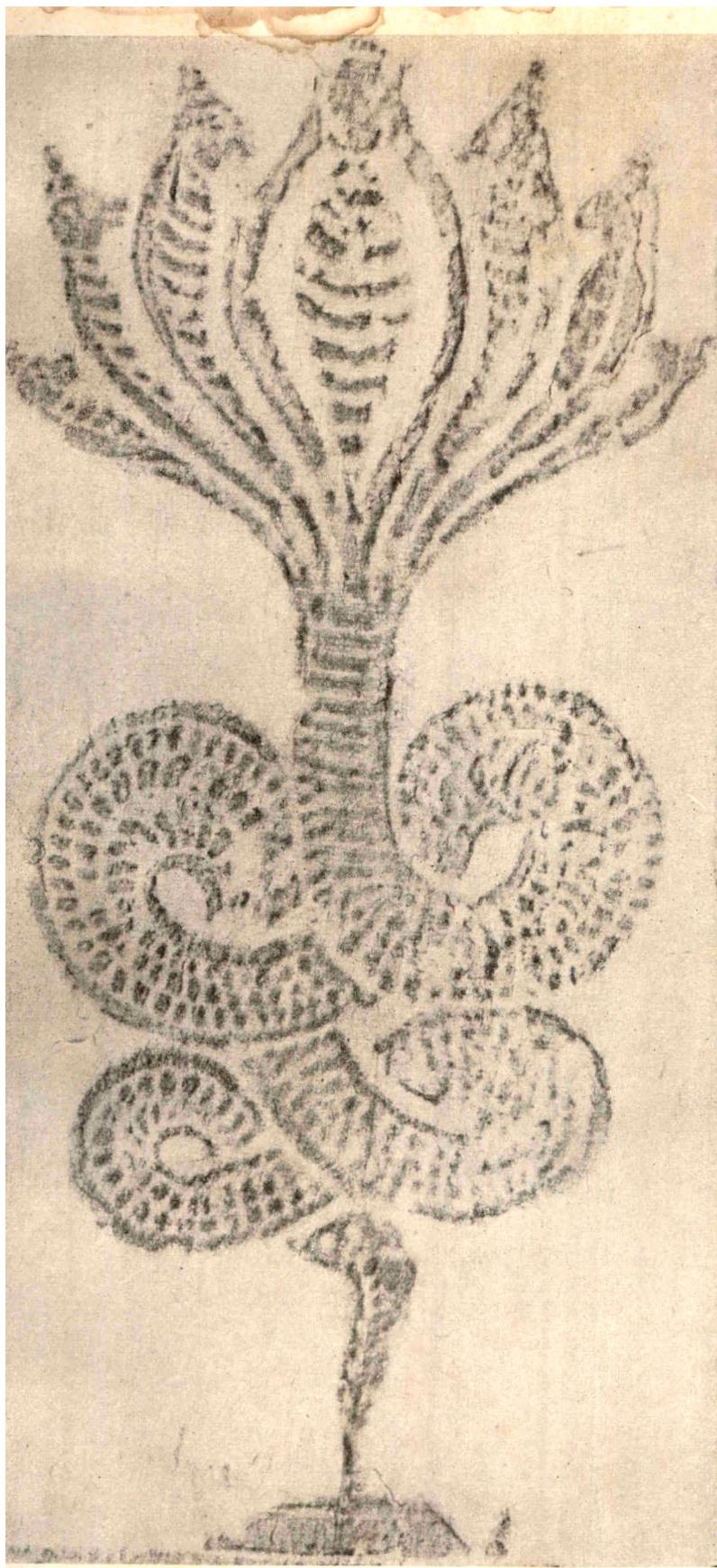
UDDHIST FIGURE from a prayer-wall Sherpaland, Nepal

FIRST SERMON OF THE  
BUDDHA IN A DEER PARK  
*Goli, Andhra Pradesh*



ELEPHANT KING AND HIS BLIND MOTHER   *Goli, Andhra Pradesh*





SERPENT  
*from a Hindu temple*  
Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh



I-STONE Panjim, Goa original site unknown

# SOME WAYS TO TURN ON NEW IDEAS

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SAM GLUCKSBERG

WHERE DO NEW IDEAS come from? In our research at Princeton, we have found that creative behaviour is inherent in man's nature, even in a young child learning to talk. When he says, "Mama" he is merely imitating, but sooner or later he will say things that are truly creative.

For example, when he says, "Daddy goed away," instead of "Daddy went away," he has put together "go" and the past tense unit "-ed" to create a word he has not heard before. In this way, he has done what every creative person in history has done before him: produced a useful, novel act by combining new behaviour with old habits.

This notion is by no means new. Robert Fulton made a similar analogy between language and invention: "The mechanic should sit among levers, screws, wedges, wheels, etc., like a poet among the letters of the alphabet considering them as the exhibition of his thoughts, in which *a new arrangement*

transmits a new idea to the world."

The eminent mathematician, Henri Poincare, expressed a similar idea: "To create consists precisely in not making useless combinations and in making those which are useful and which are only in a small minority. Invention is discernment, choice."

If invention is discernment and choice, then it follows that the inventor must have something to choose from. The elements that must be combined must be available separately in the first place.

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press provides a dramatic illustration of this. All the pieces to Gutenberg's puzzle —how to produce the Bible cheaply and efficiently—were there. He knew about wood engraving, about coin-stamping and wax seals, and was also familiar with the powerful wine press.

Given these elements, the printing press might almost invent itself. But how are they to be put together? How does a man happen to think of them all simultaneously and then recognize the implications of the combination?

It happened to Gutenberg one autumn afternoon, when he ". . . took part in

the wine harvest. I watched the wine flowing, and going back from the effect to the cause. I studied the power of this press which nothing can resist.... A simple substitution which is a ray of light...."

As Arthur Koestler pointed out in his book *The Act of Creation*, this ray of light was the new association between the wine press and the seal, which together form the essential concept of the letter press.

Old ideas in combination, then, yield new ideas. Are there specific kinds of events or circumstances which tend to trigger these new ideas, or must we leave things to chance, hoping that people like Gutenberg just happen to be in the right places at the right times?

Some answers to questions like this are coming from the psychological laboratory. At Princeton, our aim is to discover the detailed mechanisms of the creative process, and in this way make possible improved procedures for fostering and training creative behaviour.

#### *Duncker's Strategy*

With this as a goal, we study fairly simple forms of creative behaviour so that the mechanisms involved may be controlled, isolated, manipulated, and, ultimately, understood. In our laboratory we have used problems of the sort first designed by Karl Duncker, an eminent German psychologist. These are known as *functional fixedness* problems, and they all involve using a familiar object in a novel way.

For example, the ordinary use for a hammer is driving nails. This ordinary

function may become fixed, and block other possibilities—using the hammer as: a pendulum weight, an electrical conductor or insulator, a weapon, musical instrument, bell clapper, paperweight, anchor, wedge, lever, sundial, sculpture, projectile, measuring rod, ballast, book-end, mixing paddle, door knocker, trail marker, semaphore, bookmark, or what have you.

What sorts of things affect the likelihood of such combinations of new uses for old objects? Duncker's original studies, conducted in the 1930's, demonstrated that having a common, ordinary use fresh in the mind can block new ideas. He gave people five problems, each requiring that some object be used in a novel way. These problems, with his results, are summarized in the table on page 63.

Group A worked on the problems without first using each object in habitual ways. This group did very well. Group B, however, had to use the critical objects in normal ways just before or during each problem. This had disastrous effects on their ability to produce simple but original solutions.

Consider the second problem, where a thumbtack box had to be used as a candleholder. If the box was empty, the problem was trivial, and all of Group A solved it. If the box was filled with tacks, then less than half the people thought of using the box as a candleholder. We have repeated this particular experiment with bright college students and, in the appropriately difficult condition, as many as 80 per cent could not solve the candle problem, even if given thirty minutes to work it!

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Normal Use</i>	<i>Unusual Use</i>	<i>Group A*</i>	<i>Group B*</i>
1	Gimlet	Bore holes	Hang string from	100	71.4
2	Box	Container	Candleholder	100	42.9
3	Pliers	Remove nails	Support for board	100	44.4
4	Weight	Pendulum bob	Hammer	100	75.0
5	Paper clip	Fasten papers	Hook	85.7	57.1

\* Percentage of those who succeeded in solving problem.

Fortunately, this effect dissipates with time. Robert Adamson and Donald Taylor, psychologists at Stanford University, found that the strongest functional fixedness effect occurs within the first half hour following habitual behaviour. It is still present at the end of one day, but disappears by the end of the week.

### *The Incubation Effect*

The Adamson and Taylor findings suggest a reasonable, although partial, explanation of what is called the incubation effect. The incubation effect refers to that curious state of affairs where we have a problem we cannot solve and find that the answer pops into our mind several hours, days, or even weeks later, often when we are not consciously aware of the problem at all.

My own interpretation of this is that something inhibiting the solution has lost its strength, and the solution can then occur. This means that the solution to many a puzzling problem is there, in our minds, but for some reason is inhibited by competing ideas. This may explain why we feel rather foolish ("why didn't I think of that?") when someone else solves a problem we were concerned with.

It all seems so simple in retrospect.

Some of our own work takes off on this general kind of problem—the kind everyone knows the answer to but somehow can't think of. In other words, we used problems that people should be able to solve on the basis of knowledge they have, but the problems were difficult because of various inhibitory factors.

We first looked at one source of inhibition: the effect of motivation upon problem-solving success. A difficult problem is difficult, at least in part, because of competing ideas, with the strongest idea being the wrong one. This keeps the correct idea from reaching conscious awareness.

An impressive amount of evidence from both animal and human learning experiments had shown that increasing motivation strengthens strong habits more than weak habits. Under high motivation, strong habits will get much stronger, while weaker habits will get only slightly stronger. We reasoned, then, that increasing motivation in a functional fixedness problem, where the incorrect habit is the strongest, should actually decrease the chances of success.

We gave the candle and box problem to college students under two levels of motivation. The solution, of course, is to

take the tacks out of the box and then use the box as a candleholder, a new idea combining the concepts of tack box and candleholder. Half the students worked for the chance of winning up to \$25, while the other half worked for no particular reward.

The results were dramatically clear: The group working for a high reward came up with half as many solutions as the non-motivated group, and the average solution times were twice as long. High motivation simply reinforced the tendency to persist down blind alleys with the strong but incorrect initial ideas.

The implications for designing creative environments are clear. Excessive motivation, whether in the form of high rewards for performance, or anxiety over the possibilities of failure, inhibits creativity.

#### *Useless Hints*

How, then, can we break the inhibition barrier? Is flexibility training one answer? In a word, Yes. If people are given, say, four easy problems where common objects must be used in novel ways, then they solve more difficult problems more readily. How they do this, however, is not perfectly clear. We must now ask what, specifically, have these people learned?

Whatever it is, they are unable to put it easily into words. We asked all the people of one group who had been given practice problems to write a hint that would be useful to someone else who might get those problems. We did not allow specific answers, just programmatic hints. And we got them, like,

"Don't be blind to unusual possibilities," and "Remember that anything can be used for something."

These hints seemed to be potentially useful. Others seemed particularly useless, such as "Every problem can be solved," and "If you work on it, you'll get it."

Once all these hints had been collected, we gave them to a second group of people. This second group, like the group that had provided the hints, were given the circuit problem. This was developed in our laboratory and provides a sensitive measure of freedom from habitual thought. A simple circuit must be completed.

The only real problem is that not enough wire is supplied. A screwdriver, to tighten and loosen the screw terminals on the switch, provides the means to fill the gap. The blade of the screwdriver must be used in a new way to conduct electricity, as a substitute for missing wire.

The puzzling aspect of this study was that the hint-receiving group was not helped by those hints at all. Indeed, the hints we judged to be good did no better than those that seemed completely useless, and there was no relation between how good a problem-solver was and the hint he had written! Whatever the people with practice learned, it was not something they could communicate.

What does this mean? To answer the question, we began to explore some relations between thinking and language. One way of finding out how we think about something is to find out how we talk about it. A habitual thought pattern can be revealed by habitual language

patterns. In many cases, dependence upon habitual language patterns can control our thinking.

As the noted linguist Benjamin Whorf has pointed out, the particular language we use to describe the world can have a major impact upon what we think of and how we think. The way we use a concept, idea, or object may very well be influenced significantly by the name we use for that concept, idea, or object.

One commercial application of this principle has already paid off. For years, a mail order tool company had sold something called "crown scissors," used primarily in dental work. When the name, and only the name, was changed to "bantam tinsnips," sales increased sharply. The potential uses of the tool were clearly dictated by its name, not only by its physical appearance and structure.

#### *JOD and PEEM*

Would changing people's ways of using language, then, help to remove barriers to original ideas? In one set of experiments we have the circuit problem with a wrench to be used as a wire substitute. What would happen if we gave the wrench a new name?

Calling it wire of course solves the problem in advance. We might just as well call a boiling kettle a steam engine, and so anticipate James Watt, the inventor of the modern steam engine.

We would, in fact, be making the novel combination that we want our problem-solvers to make for themselves: combine the concept of metal wrench and electrical conductivity. We used a

nonsense word, PEEM, for the wire. And to remove the cluster of habitual ideas associated with the word wrench, we called it JOD. This had the effect of giving the problem-solvers a miniature new language, free from interfering associations.

When ordinary language is used, few people can think of the wrench as an electrical conductor. But when the wrench has a new, meaningless name, its availability as a conductor increases enormously. People even use it instead of wire before they actually run out of wire! This wrench becomes, thanks to its new label, available for any use of the moment—as a gadget or a doohickey. an all-purpose thing.

Not only do individual names influence our thinking. The relations between names may do so as well. In a situation somewhat like our doohickey one, we used a number of different tools, and called the tool either wrench or pliers.

Since the tool had to be used as if it were wire, would the rhyming of pliers with wires help people to think of the functional similarity between the two? Indeed it did. No matter what the tool actually was, pliers or wrench, calling it pliers seemed to trigger the idea of using the tool as wires, even though none of the sixty-four people involved in this particular experiment could say how they happened to think of the solution. Rhyming helped, but unconsciously.

At this point, we wondered if we could actually put a person into the laboratory, give him a problem which required combining old ideas, and then trigger a solution at will, at any time.

## SOME WAYS TO TURN ON NEW IDEAS

We set up the circuit problem as one of two parallel, or concurrent jobs. The problem-solver worked on the circuit in the ordinary way, using a screwdriver for the screw terminals on the switch. Simultaneously he was to listen for the sound of a buzzer. When the buzzer sounded, he had to take his screwdriver and slice a piece of modelling clay from a large chunk nearby, and then put that slice into a small container. The buzzer was then shut off, and he returned to the circuit job.

We reasoned that this would call attention to an alternative use of the screwdriver, and an unusual one at that. Therefore the problem should be solved at that point in time. Other people, at the sound of the buzzer, had to turn a screw to turn off the buzzer. Here, we call attention to the screwdriver, but its use is ordinary, it turns a screw. Therefore people with this job should not be helped; no idea relevant to the circuit problem should be triggered.

We succeeded in doing what we had set out to do. Not only did the people using the screwdriver in a novel way perform much better than their counterparts, but they got the idea within twenty seconds of the buzzer sound. We had succeeded, then, in taking people at random, and controlling not only whether or not they would display creative behaviour, but *when*.

Despite this success, however, the study of the creative process, the moment of insight, is just beginning. We still do not know whether creative people, judged to be creative in the real world outside the laboratory, actually do what we have gotten our experimental problem-solvers

to do.

The next phase of study must include systematic comparison of creative and non-creative people in standardized laboratory tests, to see if we have in fact succeeded in creating a mirror of the real world, or whether we have simply built an artificial system that does work but is of little relevance to things outside the laboratory.

Personally, I doubt that this is the case, and even at this stage we can offer some general conclusions about the nature of the creative process. These conclusions are best expressed as answers to the question: What are the necessary conditions for the production of original, goal-oriented ideas?

### *The RAT*

First, the separate elements needed for creative combination must be available. In the circuit problem, the potential solver must know that wire is missing and that metal conducts electricity, and that the screwdriver is made, in part, of metal.

To take a somewhat different example, before a person can think of an answer to an item on the Remote Associates Test, he must know it. The RAT is a test of creativity devised by Sarnoff Mednick, a psychologist at the University of Michigan.

Each item consists of three words, such as *heart, cookies, sixteen*. The person taking the test must supply a fourth word which is associated in some way with all three.

In this case, the answer is *sweet*—we all know it, but some of us may not be

able to think of it. We *must* know it, though, if it is our creativity that is to be tested.

An item with the three words, *book*, *blood*, and *gears* requires the answer *worm* (bookworm, bloodworm, worm gear), and is not a particularly good item for testing creativity because few people know all three connections.

Accidental discoveries, such as X-rays, penicillin, dynamite, even the printing press, occur only to the prepared mind.

Second, given the availability of the necessary elements, it is their combination that produces original ideas. Any procedure which facilitates relevant combinations will promote creative behaviour. This conclusion is supported by the success, albeit limited, of industrial creativity training procedures, as well as by laboratory research. Such procedures include releasing inhibition and freeing thought by introducing novel ways of talking about things.

Third, creativity is not necessarily confined to a small, exclusive set of gifted people. As we have been able to show, people can be influenced to behave in specific creative ways, and people can be trained to increase their creative behaviour in general.

If someone does not act as creatively as we might wish, chances are that his

creative potential is being inhibited by any of a number of factors: excess motivation, anxiety, fear of taking risks, dependence upon authority, or habitual modes of thinking and talking about things. If, as we have argued, language is the prototypical creative act, then all of us have the potential for creative thought.

Finally, and perhaps most important, it is our conviction that creativity, the generation of new ideas, can be studied systematically. We are confident that we will, in the end, have a theoretical account of the creative mechanisms that is detailed enough and broad enough in scope to provide the basis for a vigorous technology of education.

We can now provide the elements necessary for creative thought, with sophisticated educational techniques such as programmed instruction. There is no reason why we cannot develop equally effective techniques to teach people to use these elements in creative ways. The day we can do this is, I venture to predict, not very far off.

DR. SAM GLUCKSBERG, *Associate Professor of Psychology at Princeton University and an Associate Editor of "American Scientist," is the head of the Princeton group whose research he describes above.*

# ARE WHITE LIBERALS OBSOLETE IN THE BLACK STRUGGLE?

JAMES FARMER

SEVERAL MONTHS AGO I received a telephone call from a stranger. The caller identified himself as a Negro and said that he was confused. He felt he was damned if he did and damned if he didn't.

"Just a few years ago," he said, "civil rights leaders were saying that the creative and radical thing to do was to break down Jim Crow by integrating white neighbourhoods." So he and his bride met the challenge and battled their way into a lily white suburb. They overcame the vandalism and survived the physical threats and the isolation. They made it. "Now," he went on, "Negroes call us Uncle Toms and ex-coloured folk for living out here with all these white people."

Soon the Los Angeles City School Board, after years of prodding by militant civil rights leaders, is expected to come up with plans for total desegregation of the city's schools. If these plans take shape, they will not now be hailed as a victory by the black community.

The scattered applause which may greet the change will be smothered by the relentless opposition of those who demand local community control of ghetto schools instead of dispersal of their children.

## *The Issue Today*

The agenda of the black ghetto is changing rapidly. Last week's cliches have a hollow ring. Yesterday's answers have lost their relevance. If white America is bewildered by the swirl of shifting demands, it is not alone. There is lack of comprehension among many black folk, too.

Behind the rhetoric and posturing of today, a fundamental debate is rending the black community. The shallow newspaper headlines have done nothing to clarify the controversy, and the news accounts have oversimplified and distorted it.

The issue is not militancy versus moderation. There are militants indeed and there are moderates, too, in both camps. Nor is "integration versus separation" the definitive division.

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Which is it—integration or separation—when a black student joins a campus Afro-American association after choosing freely to enter an integrated university? Then, is it youth against age? The young, it is true, carry the burden of the argument on one side, while many of their elders form the bulwark on the other. But chronology must not be confused with ideology.

Is the question, then, “black power”? How does one debate a slogan without a precise statement of its meaning?

There is an issue, however, and it is frighteningly real. The question stripped bare is this: What is the way for black Americans to find a meaning for their existence and to achieve dignity in the American context? Is it through assimilation? Or is it through racial cohesiveness?

### *A Lesson from History*

This is not an unfamiliar debate on American soil. All immigrant groups have wrestled with it, and it has torn many asunder. In each case there have been voices speaking for group cohesion, for maintaining cultural identity, for a kind of subnationalism within this nation. There have also been voices urging dispersal, and assimilation, and pressing the smaller group to enter the larger group of their new national home.

Invariably, in the first generation, internal insecurity of the group and external hostility towards it gave ascendancy to the voices favouring group cohesion. The greater the external pressure, the greater the cohesion. Immigrants and their descendants remained

Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, Polish-Americans, Jewish-Americans, with the accent on their original identity. As the external pressure was reduced, the voices of assimilation became more compelling. The ethnic hyphens faded, but they have never completely disappeared.

Among black people, the ideological division has been of longer duration, because of their high visibility and the background of slavery. After emancipation the debate began, but in a low key. Many Negroes wanted then to return to Africa, and some did. But most sought somehow to make their way here—some as a separate people, and some as an assimilated group.

What was the American Negro—or the Negro American? A black man who happened, through historical accident, to live in America, or an American who, by genetic accident, happened to be black? In 1903, W. W. B. Du Bois put the dilemma thus:

*One feels his two-ness—an American Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals, in one dark body....*

*The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self....*

*He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach the Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make*

*it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon....*

### *Three Failures*

The ferocious quality of the debate in black America is of recent vintage, and was triggered by three failures—the failure of newly won legal and constitutional civil rights prerogatives to effect any meaningful change in the life situation of black people; the failure of the assault on segregation to halt the trend towards increasing segregation in housing and schools; and the failure of all efforts to have any discernible impact on racism in the nation's society.

"Everything has changed, but everything remains the same," one hears constantly in the South. De facto segregation throughout the nation continues to rise. The income gap is still widening. Racism, like a miasma, is still breathed with the air.

Throughout this century the ascendancy among the contending Negroes has been held by those who sought dispersal and assimilation. With the Supreme Court school desegregation decision of 1954 this ascendancy rode on a wave of euphoria. Two years ago, however, optimism receded to leave the bitter taste of hollow victories in the mouths of the black masses.

What has been said to the black man throughout this century, by his leaders and by white liberals, is that he must think of himself as an individual and not as a member of a group, and that if, as an individual, he gained education and money he would first be acculturated

and then assimilated into a racially integrated society. He would become, in reality, a white man with an invisible black skin in a colour-blind community.

Men of good will, black and white, bowed to the myth that proximity would, in itself, produce colour-blindness. If assimilation were achieved, the black man would have no ethnic or racial identity; he would be an American distributed through every phase of the nation's life. The black ghetto would disappear; the Harlems would become nightmares of the past.

For many years no responsible leader would have suggested that improvement of educational or housing conditions in the ghetto could possibly serve any useful purpose. The ghettos were seen as an anachronism; to improve them would be to perpetuate the evil of segregation. Privately supported Negro colleges almost went bankrupt.

A. Philip Randolph was castigated in the late 1950's for urging formation of a "Negro American Labour Council." White students in integrated colleges complained that black students were not yet truly emancipated, for when two Negroes entered the dining hall they frequently sat together and talked with each other, rather than distributing themselves in the best integrated fashion. The cry was "segregation in reverse."

Efforts to implement this dispersion concept of integration obviously have failed, though some still argue for it—naively, I think. It no longer enjoys the widespread acceptance in the black community which it once had. Indeed, it is today under fierce attack. What the dispersion concept required of the

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black man was a kind of abnegation, a losing of himself as a black man to find himself as an American.

Its opponents argue for an ethnic cohesiveness, a finding of himself as a black man, as the urgent goal. They advocate group self-assertion. They foster pride in pigmentation, rather than white mimicry. Rather than disperse the ghetto and reject self, they would preserve, cherish, and develop the ghetto, and love the black self.

Some of the ethnic unity advocates are separationists and view the ghetto, which they seek to upgrade, as a separate community preferably to remain alienated from the body politic. Others see it as an ethnic community among many ethnic communities in our cities, and as a power fulcrum to propel the black man into the political and economic mainstream, thereby changing the mainstream significantly.

### *The Truth Will Emerge*

So, there are debates within debates. The debates are creative and good. The truth, I am sure, will emerge somewhere between the extremes.

The black man must find himself as a black man before he can find himself as an American. He must now become a hyphenated American, discovering the hyphen so that he can eventually lose it. This involves accepting the stark reality that the black ghettos of our cities are not going to disappear in the foreseeable future. Nor is racism.

The Afro-American cannot skip the hyphenated phase in his development, and the losing of his hyphen will be

more difficult for him, as I have suggested, because of his high visibility, because of the experience of slavery, and because of a racial mystique, deeply rooted in both white and Negro, which holds the Negro inferior.

Paradoxically, the black man must, I think, strengthen his ghetto on the one hand, and continue to provide an exit on the other. He must build the economic and political power of the ghetto as he simultaneously fights for open-occupancy housing, which eventually will destroy the ghetto, but will provide the Negro with a new potency as a full American.

This is bound to be a long and agonizing process, encompassing a series of progressive and regressive steps—some dramatic, some prosaic, some violent, some passive. A thin line separates group self-pride and self-hate. To expect that all will walk that line without crossing it is naive. To ask that it not be walked because some will step over it is to ask the impossible.

If the rhetoric of proponents of black consciousness is sometimes excessive, it is because they are trying to "de-programme" themselves. They, too, are creatures of a national culture which has held them worthless. "Black is beautiful and it is so great to be black." If they shout too loudly, it is because they are shouting down the echoes of 400 years of contrary conditioning.

### *White Liberals Today*

Those least capable of understanding what is happening in the ghetto today are, I fear, the white liberals. Their

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reaction is more than a matter of unrequited love. The new formulations of black unity fly in the face of their liberal dogmas and challenge every cliche they hold dear. Such a cliche is "breaking up the ghetto." Another is the "colour-blindness" mystique. Still another is the shibboleth of interracialism, which requires, for instance, that every house party have at least one black guest.

But the white liberal is even more shattered by the redefinition of his role, or, more accurately, the rejection of his former role. Liberals have not hated us; they have loved us. It is the bigots who have hated us, and hate is its own bizarre kind of flattery; it pays its victims the high compliment of worthiness. But paternalistic love depreciates them. Hate says to a man that he is an equal; paternalism tells him he is a child. But what happens to paternalism when the child grows up?

The horror of racist programming in America, from womb to tomb, is that it has pictured the black man as an incompetent, a child—the "boy," "girl," and first-name syndrome—or at best it has viewed him as a little brother who must have his big brother as his keeper. Despite all protestations to the contrary, the historic Negro-liberal alliance, from the Abolitionists to today, has been on that basis. We blacks have been junior partners, not equals.

As a liberal friend wrote to me recently in response to my reply to his initial inquiry as to whether we had been wrong all these years he and I had fought together for integration, "... some of our long-cherished cliches about the civil rights struggle do need updating. [But]

... some things I continue to believe are absolute truths; among these is the fundamental truth that each man in fact be his brother's keeper, regardless of race...."

Another cliche. And that is precisely the problem: liberals have been our custodians, guardians, handlers, *keepers*, but not our *brothers*, our eyeball-to-eyeball equals.

A middle-aged white lady, a mover in liberal causes for many years, asked me a few weeks ago why it is that now when the hand of friendship is offered to black people in the ghettos, often as not they bite it.

I tried to explain that black people, especially of the lower economic strata, were hitherto silent, pliant, and largely invisible. But now they have found their voice. They are bursting with existence and are willing no longer to have their whole lives ordered by others. They insist upon making for themselves the decisions which determine their lives. They will make mistakes, but they must be their mistakes, their blunders.

Free a man and he is not yet free. He must still free himself. This I viewed as a positive development towards participatory democracy. Help and cooperation, I argued, must be given on those terms, their terms, or not at all.

The worst result of the nation's racist programming is that even black people until now have absorbed the concept of themselves as inferior. It has stunted their growth. A child does not mature so long as he plays the role of a child. When he reaches adulthood, it is good that he leaves the household and rejects the parent if the parent does not begin to

view him as an adult. Black people have now grown up in their self-image, and have walked out of the house.

White liberalism has lost its relevance to the black struggle because it is emotionally and ideologically out of date. Some liberals have conquered their paternalism, and a few—a precious few—escaped the virus all along. But liberalism, on the whole, is weak in this respect.

To regain their relevance to the Negro struggle, white liberals must reorient their feelings and their thinking. They must get over seeing themselves as great white fathers and mothers, brokers of power and patronage for black people. They must learn that if they stoop down to offer, in the missionary way, the hand of friendship, the offer will be rejected, the hand bitten. If they offer it laterally, it will be circled warily, eyed suspiciously, then perhaps taken gingerly and tentatively.

#### *The Coming of Age of the Negro*

The coming of age of the Negro has been psychological. But it is also political. The recent elections in Cleveland, Gary, Virginia, and several counties in Mississippi demonstrated that the black vote has matured in the grandest American tradition. The Negro electorate no longer is content to deprecate itself by having whites as its exclusive political custodians. It no longer is willing to be partner to the myth that political decision-making is white men's work.

This shakes to its roots the urban coalition which has kept the Democratic kite aloft. The "tail" of the alliance has

moved up front to join labour, liberals, ethnic blocs, and professional political machines as part of the kite itself. The Democratic Party must now accommodate to this new development or face disaster in 1968.

The new black maturation, apparent for some time in the psychological sense and now visible in the political arena, has encompassed the economic and educational areas only in demand, not yet in performance. Economically the ghettos are still colonies; the income-producing properties are owned by absentees, and the inhabitants are consumers paying inflated prices. A balance of payments position like theirs would cause England's Prime Minister Harold Wilson to do more than devalue the pound.

Ghetto folk are now demanding that the outward flow of dollars be reversed and that economic control of their communities be turned over to those who share their woes and dreams. None but the lunatic fringe among them clings to the bootstrap illusion that Negroes can do it all alone. Most are keenly aware that they lack the boots—the capital, the technical know-how, the managerial skills.

But help from whites must be consultative and advisory; the decisions must be made by the Negroes in the ghettos. They want industries to invest in their communities, and a few are beginning to do so—to build plants, to grant franchises, to train managers. It is mandatory, though, that such properties, when built, be turned over to the local community people—when trained—to run.

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In Watts, Aerojet Corporation has built a subsidiary, the Watts Manufacturing Company, which makes tents and allied products. Watts people have been trained to run the plant from top to bottom. Plans are being made to allow the five hundred employees to purchase stock in the company. The Watts Manufacturing Company, alone, will not save Watts, but it is a start towards providing ghetto dwellers with some measure of control over their economic destiny.

The demand for control over their own future is nowhere so compelling as in the educational realm. After more than a decade of using every device available in a vain attempt to get their children into white schools, in the hope that white power would insure quality education because white children were their classmates, black parents have reversed their field.

The demand, as yet unachieved, is now for local community control of ghetto schools. School boards have failed to integrate and failed to educate black children, so now black parents around the country are mounting insistent campaigns for decentralization of authority, giving them control over

administrators and curricula in ghetto schools.

They could hardly do worse than the school boards—witness the widening gap in learning, from grades one through twelve, between ghetto youngsters and others. They might do much better, for they have one thing which the school boards have lacked: a passionate concern for their children's education and future.

The debate will rage on between cohesiveness and dispersion. Ascendancy of one camp or the other will be determined ultimately not by rhetoric, and not even by leadership, as much as by events. Events today seem to be racing to the side of the spirited new force—cohesion—and I think that is right and good for the black man at this historical juncture.

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JAMES FARMER, now a professor of social welfare at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, founded the Congress of Racial Equality and served as its director from 1961 to 1966 when he resigned in order to start a national literacy drive. He is the author of "Freedom—When?"

# THE NEGRO OPPOSITION TO BLACK EXTREMISM

RAYMOND W. MACK

MOST AMERICANS NOW ALIVE have grown up with the assumption that citizens opposed to desegregation of the races are anti-Negro. Yet today black militant spokesmen are addressing us from diverse platforms—the Public Broadcast Laboratory of TV, the New Left Politics convention, *Esquire* magazine—with insistent demands that black Americans build their own separate politics and economics on black pride and within the black community.

We hear that black students should be taught black economics and black history by black teachers in black neighbourhood schools. We are told to stop mourning Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., because his crusade for racial integration by non-violent means was out of date and discredited even before his assassination.

Do most American Negroes agree with the black extremist doctrine?

How do most Negro Americans feel about desegregation of American institutions as opposed to the new separatism?

The underlying question is whether black militant *spokesmen* are *leaders*. We

have had experience in the United States with white extremist spokesmen such as the late George Rockwell, but most Americans have not mistaken white extremists for *leaders*. H. Rap Brown has demonstrated his leadership ability in at least one arena where success is critical for an aspiring public figure: He is able to lead TV newsmen. Whether he has a comparable following among Negroes is another question.

Press reports of the rioting, looting, and burning that occurred in 125 cities of the nation in the wake of Dr. King's murder in Memphis have been virtually unanimous in saying that only a very small percentage of Negro residents of the cities involved took part in the lawlessness. But observations of the news reporters were necessarily immediate and off-the-top-of-the-head. Are deeper measures of Negro attitudes available?

## *Some Quantitative Research*

We have nothing like the information we ought to have on such a serious matter. However, some of my colleagues in social science and I have done research that sheds light on the question.

Section 402 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 called for a report to Congress and

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## NEGRO OPPOSITION TO BLACK EXTREMISM

the President on the progress that had been made in implementing the Supreme Court decision of 1954. In response to this call, the United States Office of Education asked Professor James S. Coleman, a mathematical sociologist at Johns Hopkins University, to undertake a scientific sample survey of the country.

Professor Coleman and his research associates worked out tests and questionnaires to study the attitudes of district superintendents, principals, teachers, and third-, sixth-, ninth-, and twelfth-grade pupils in 4,000 schools, as well as first graders in about 2,000 schools—in all, more than half a million pupils and 60,000 teachers.

Professor Coleman suggested that his quantitative data should be buttressed by in-depth interviews. He knew that the statistics which would come from the results of his questionnaire-polls would tell what people's attitudes were but not why those attitudes were held or how the attitudes reflected the social context in which they were formed. So he asked me to plan and execute a set of case studies which together would characterize the variation in American society.

### *Are Black Militant Spokesmen Leaders?*

Choosing communities to represent this rich diversity was a formidable task. I needed to know the variation not only on the factor immediately under examination—racial desegregation—but on the characteristics that might influence it. I tried therefore to select communities differing in their histories of segregation, in the kinds and amounts of segregation currently practised, and in the process of

desegregation.

It was evident that two gross social characteristics would be major determiners: the size and the location of the communities. Consequently, I chose a few huge metropolitan areas, some small towns, and several medium-sized cities, at least one of each—small, medium, and large—in the South.

To assure a truly representative sample of Mississippi Delta attitudes, it was necessary to disguise the real identities of the two communities I chose there. Negro and white residents alike declined to participate until after they had been guaranteed complete anonymity. Hence, those two places will be referred to hereafter only as River City (55 per cent Negro) and Bayou County (60 per cent Negro).

In 1960, almost two-thirds of the families in River City and Bayou County had incomes below the accepted poverty line of \$3,000 a year. Less than half the adult Negroes had gone to school as long as five years, only 5 per cent had completed high school.

The other Southern sites of our study were Atlanta, the financial capital of the South, a city of nearly half a million people with a metropolitan area of more than 1,200,000 (38.3 per cent nonwhite); and Savannah, an old Deep-South industrial port in Georgia, across the Savannah River from South Carolina (population approximately 150,000, 35.7 per cent nonwhite).

In the Southwest, I chose Riverside, California (population 130,000, 5.3 per cent nonwhite), a middle-class Los Angeles suburb in which the lower classes are predominantly Negro and Mexican-

American; and East Los Angeles, the Mexican ghetto of metropolitan Los Angeles. To represent the Midwest, I picked Chicago (3,500,000 population, 23.6 per cent nonwhite), a city characterized by a complex of white ethnic groups strongly resistant to desegregation; and Kalamazoo, site of Western Michigan University (80,000 population, 5.3 per cent nonwhite) noted for a low rate of unemployment and a high level of civic pride.

In the Northeast, I selected Hempstead, New York, because it has the largest Negro population on Long Island (population 35,000, 21.9 per cent nonwhite); and Newark, Delaware (population 11,000, less than 7 per cent Negro), which is unusual in two respects: it is the home of the University of Delaware and is subject to the enormous influence of the du Pont Corporation.

#### *Instructions to Field Workers*

Having fixed the geographical pattern the in-depth research would follow, I chose field workers already well acquainted with the particular communities.

I asked the workers to employ in these American cities and towns those methods of research usually associated with anthropological studies of exotic communities. Each worker (there were eleven in all) was instructed to read about the particular community assigned to him, observe, participate in formal and informal groups, listen to what the people said and how they said it and note, too, what they did not say.

To make the study as consistent as

possible, I wrote a set of field instructions and drafted an outline of what should be reported. Each worker was asked to use direct quotations from interviewees in writing up the community response. Each chapter of each report was to present a history of the community, a description of the community's economic base and political power structure, a note on the religious and ethnic background of the population.

In concluding his report, each worker was required to assess the process of desegregation in the community, define the attitudes of blacks and whites, and project the future which the worker felt was most likely to emerge from the present situation and distribution of beliefs.

My purpose was to leave the instructions open-ended enough so as not to lose interesting and meaningful data that might lie on the margin of any structured interview.

Hundreds of man-hours thereafter went into personal conversations, attendance at parent-teacher meetings and at school board hearings on segregation questions and at planning sessions of civil rights groups. All shades of opinion and emotional intensity were recorded. Teachers, students, and parents were encouraged by the researchers' proximity and intimate participation to say what was really on their minds.

#### *Responses Favour Desegregation*

Nowhere in the country did we discover evidence to support the idea that most black Americans subscribe to separatism and would prefer black

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schools for black children. Of course we did not find that commitment to desegregation was universal, either. For example, this complaint was voiced by a black interviewee in Hempstead:

*It's demoralizing to be in a learning situation where everyone thinks you're an oddball. Where even you think you're an oddball: some kind of freak! And the teachers . . . they're prejudiced, too. In the beginning of the year they point at you and say, "I don't like you," and then you're in trouble for the rest of the year.*

But that is not the response we heard from most of the black people we interviewed. On the contrary, in every one of the ten communities we studied, the views of most Negro parents paralleled the opinion expressed by a Negro minister in Savannah:

*If our students are going to qualify for jobs that are opening up to them, it is essential that they get the best education, and the best happens to be "white" right now.*

Indeed, our study indicated that black Americans remain suspicious of proposals to upgrade predominantly Negro schools as a substitute for desegregation. That suspicion is not confined to the South. A leader of the group striving for desegregation in Riverside, California, declared:

*In 1963, almost ten years after the Supreme Court denied the possibility of "separate but equal," the Riverside*

*school board decided to upgrade its minority schools, rather than desegregate them. . . . If it succeeded, it was to be used as a justification for a continuation of segregated schools.*

Even in the heartland of segregation, the Mississippi Delta, where resistance to desegregation is maximal and pressure for it is risky, black leaders are firmly committed. A middle-class Negro from River City described their strategy:

*Our philosophy is this: We have 146 children in the white schools. These white schools can't get many more Negroes registered without moving to a double shift. . . . If we can get enough Negroes into the white schools . . . then they will have to go to Negro schools, and the moment that happens they are going to have to bring those Negro schools up to the standards of whites.*

In Savannah, Negro parents are discouraged but not defeated by the difficulties encountered by the first nineteen Negro students in a formerly all-white school. As one parent said:

*They had a number of social and psychological pressures working against them and it showed up in their work. Not one made the honour roll that first year. Psychologically it was difficult because they switched schools their senior year. . . . Their sense of (in) security, loss of friends, and teachers heightened their displacement.*

Mrs. Esther Garrison, another Negro parent who is also a member of the Savannah school board, added:

*It was unfair to expect students to transfer (in) their senior year. . . . It was (the school board's) way of discouraging large numbers of Negroes from transferring to white schools.*

Most Negro parents feel positive about the advantages of desegregation even when they worry about its costs. A Negro parent in Newark, Delaware, said:

*Actually, we have no real complaints about the school system. The only thing I object to is that no one will go out of his way for Negroes. You have to remember that it is quite a step for a Negro to really move into the white world, and a few helping hands would be an improvement. We don't expect preferential treatment, but our children do need special guidance. I know that the school counsellors are overloaded, but our eldest son sees his counsellor only once a year. He seems to be doing okay, but I can't really tell.*

#### *Motivations of Twelfth Graders*

How productive is this conviction on the part of Negro parents that desegregation is not only worthwhile but worth effort and risk to achieve?

The answer is clear in the statistical analysis of the main Coleman report which our study supplements. The Coleman questionnaire data deny the widespread white belief that Negro children

are simply not motivated to excel in school. Responses to one set of eight questions asked of twelfth graders in the metropolitan Northeast tell a story with an unmistakable moral.

The first question was: "If something happened and you had to stop school, how would you feel?" Among the white children, 47 per cent replied they would "do almost anything to stay" in school. Among Negro children, the same percentage gave the same answer.

The second question was: "How good a student do you want to be?" Among the white children, 38 per cent replied, "one of the best students." Among the Negro children, 48 per cent answered likewise.

The third question was: "About how many days did you stay away from school last year just because you did not want to come?" Among the white children, 61 per cent answered, "None," Among the Negro children, 68 per cent answered, "None."

The fourth question was: "How far do you want to go in school?" An identical percentage—86—of the white and Negro children said they wanted to go beyond high school.

The fifth question was: "Do you plan to go to college next year?" Among the white children, 46 per cent said, "Definitely yes." Among the Negro children, only 31 per cent were that confident.

The sixth question was: "Have you ever read a college catalogue?" Among the white children, 73 per cent said "yes." Among the Negro children, only 59 per cent replied positively.

The seventh question was: "Have you ever written to or talked to a college

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official about going to college?" Among the white children, 46 per cent said they had. Among the Negro children, only 32 per cent said they had.

The eighth question was: "What type of job do you think you will have when you finish your education?" Among the white children, 53 per cent said "professional or technical." Among the Negro children, only 39 per cent gave a similar response.

As long as the questions dealt with what the children considered to be possible for themselves, the ratio of Negro children who dreamed of a good education was at least as high as and sometimes higher than the ratio of white children. However, when the questions concerned matters which the children did not consider practical possibilities for themselves, the Negro ratio of positive response dropped sharply.

### *Negro Parents' Belief in Education*

Our interviews suggest that this ambition-in-the-realm-of-the-possible comes from Negro parents' belief in education as the high road to success. But why?

A dozen years ago, Eli Chinoy, a sociologist, studied the ambitions of labourers in the automobile industry. He concluded that by the time factory workers reach their late thirties, they are more or less resigned to their continued existence in that social, economic, and occupational status.

In a larger sense, however, the labourers did not abandon "the American Dream" with the passing years. Instead, Chinoy found, they transferred their hopes for their own success on to

their children, and held firmly to the belief that the American class system is open to those who work hard and take advantage of opportunities.

Just as the auto workers invested themselves completely in the possibility that their children could realize a better life, so many American Negroes today cling to "the American Dream." They cherish the idea that some day their children will make a great success in their stead. As one Negro male in Riverside, California, explained it:

*I didn't get a good education. That's why I have to work with my back. If I had known then what I know now, I would have stayed in school and worked hard at that. Now my child has got to understand that education is the way. You can't get anything in this world from the white man until you get enough education to outsmart him.*

The conviction among Negroes that segregated schools mean low quality education is by no means limited to the South. De facto segregation in Northern urban schools is also deplored. A Negro high school teacher in Chicago's West Side ghetto said:

*It's hard work to get a good education at our school. For example, we don't have a language lab, a room with a lot of electronics where you can listen and repeat and listen to students individually. Some students it would help. Some students would get a better education if they were in an integrated setup.*

*Our (the Negroes') salvation is in trying to get to the power structure, which means actually going to school with white people to learn what they think and to feel comfortable with them. You never know whether whites are more intelligent than you are until you're in a class with them.*

Where schools have been desegregated, the experience often confirms the beliefs of Negro parents. In Savannah, a black mother who has four children attending integrated schools made this observation:

*In their present school they cover twice as much material as they did at their former school . . . in the same period of time. When they were attending [segregated school] . . . they would come home and listen to records, hardly looking at a book. Now they are doing much more reading.*

Even where the process of desegregation has been arduous and hazardous, as in Mississippi, the general reaction among Negro parents is one of pride in the achievement and satisfaction with the improved quality of education. These are voices from River City:

*There was a little pickin' at the beginning, but the teacher made both the white boys and the coloured boys stay after school, and it's better now.*

*I remember once the principal whipped a Negro child who was fighting, but not the white child. But we saw him and settled the issue, and*

*there ain't been no trouble since.*

*One night my son showed me what he thought was a mistake in his arithmetic grade. I knew it was a mistake, but I told him I wasn't sure and to ask the teacher. He did the next day, and when he came home, he said, "Daddy, I told her, and she changed my grade right away."*

#### Recent Studies

In view of the violence that followed Dr. King's murder, it might reasonably be asked whether our findings are outdated—whether they are unduly optimistic. We inaugurated our study in October 1965 and completed our report in May 1966. Because of unforeseen editorial problems, publication of the report will not occur until next month. How meaningful is the extremist talk that has been spread since then?

In 1967, William Brink and Louis Harris published a study of racial attitudes. They reported that only 11 per cent of 1,059 Negroes favoured separatism. In January 1968, *Fortune* magazine published Daniel Yankelovich's interviews with 300 Negroes in thirteen American cities.

When asked their feelings about needs, the largest proportion of his interviewees (97 per cent) cited "more education for my children." The next largest response (93 per cent) was "more desegregation in schools, neighbourhoods, and jobs." Only 5 per cent expressed the opinion that desegregation of any kind was undesirable.

My own conclusion is that most American Negroes still have faith in their pur-

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suit of equality through desegregation, and that only one circumstance could persuade them to follow those extremists who hold that the promises of equality of opportunity within the traditional American structure are hollow and that the best chance for the Negro is to "go it alone." That circumstance would be a white community failure to continue the process of desegregation not only in the schools but in all other institutions.

Limitations of space prevent me from spelling out the progress that has occurred in our ten representative communities. I can only hope that those who are sufficiently interested will read our full report when it appears in book form under the title *Our Children's Burden*.

It is enough to say here that much remains to be done everywhere, and that the slow rate of change has required the Negroes to learn that protest pays. In the process of learning this lesson, they have been welded into a strong group.

Having achieved this group solidarity, black Americans are not interested in a separatism that will fragment the group

and deprive the fragments of the guarantees of the United States Constitution, the advantage of the best colleges, the pleasure of such integrated institutions as the *Tonight* show, the San Francisco Giants, the Green Bay Packers. They would simply like to see evidence of equality of opportunity in other areas: quality of public schools, housing, access to union membership, and even congressional censure.

If white America will respect the decisions of the Supreme Court and live up to the implications of the Constitution, I predict that the current talk of black separatism will become an odd and interesting item in a history of our attempt, in James Baldwin's phrase, to "achieve America."

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# THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN ASIA

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LESTER R. BROWN

FOR THOSE WHOSE THINKING of Asia is conditioned by the food crises of 1965 and 1966, the news of an agricultural revolution may come as a surprise. But the change and ferment now evident in the Asian countryside stretching from Turkey to the Philippines, and including the pivotal countries of India and Pakistan, cannot be described as anything less.

This rural revolution, largely obscured in its early years by the two consecutive failures of the monsoon, is further advanced in some countries—Pakistan, the Philippines, and India—than in others, but there is little prospect that it will abort, so powerful and pervasive are the

forces behind it.

### *The Background*

That the agricultural revolution of the less developed world began in Asia is fortunate, since it is both densely populated and has a rapid rate of population growth. In this respect, Asia is unique among the world's major geographic regions. Western Europe is heavily populated but its population grows slowly; Latin America's population is expanding rapidly but as yet most of the region is sparsely populated.

Fifty-six per cent of the world's 3.3 billion people live in Asia; one-third of the world's population, an estimated 1.1 billion, live in Asia outside China. It is this part of the world and this third of mankind that this article deals with.

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## THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN ASIA

Historically, as Asia's population increased, it was supported by traditional agriculture on an ever-expanding area of cropland. As the postwar population explosion gained momentum in the late 1950's and early 1960's, the supply of new land was used up, but the productivity of land under cultivation increased little. The result was a slowdown in the rate of gain in food production and a growing concern that population growth and food production were on a collision course.

The gravity of the situation came into focus as the monsoon on the Indian subcontinent failed two years running, in 1965 and 1966. The United States responded by shipping the equivalent of nearly one-fifth of its wheat harvest, feeding sixty million Indians for nearly two years. This record shipment, the largest ever between two countries, was sufficient to stave off famine.

### *Asian Governments Help*

As of mid-1968, both the food situation and food production prospects in Asia have changed almost beyond belief. The Philippines is self-sufficient in its staple food, rice, for the first time since 1903. Iran, with a substantial expansion in wheat acreage, is actually a net exporter of wheat this year. Ceylon's rice harvest climbed 13 per cent above the previous record, as it both expanded the area under cultivation and raised yields.

Pakistan's wheat crop, harvested in April and May, is estimated to be 30 per cent above the previous record. So is India's. The total Indian foodgrain crop, officially estimated at 100 million tons, is up 32 per cent from last year's drought-

depressed levels and, more importantly, up 12 per cent from the previous record.

Good weather has helped boost the harvest on the Indian subcontinent this year, but increases above the previous record are largely the results of solid technological progress—more efficient varieties, more fertilizer, and better farm practices.

What has caused this remarkable turnaround? One factor is new political commitments at the top in several countries. Short-changing agriculture is no longer either feasible or fashionable. This new political climate has led to firm allocations of budgetary and foreign-exchange resources.

India, for example, increased its budget for agricultural development by one-third in 1966-67; it is now using the equivalent of nearly one-fifth of its foreign-exchange earnings to import fertilizer and raw materials for manufacturing fertilizer.

Turkey's imports of fertilizer may make up the largest single item in overall imports this year, exceeding for the first time petroleum and petroleum products. The availability of fertilizer in Pakistan is twice that of two years ago and several times that of 1960; it is expected at least to double again by 1970.

Many governments which heretofore neglected agriculture have been encouraged to give agriculture a higher priority by the "short-tether" policy of the United States, whereby food-aid agreements are of short duration and renewal depends on local effort and performance. The overall scarcity of foodgrains, particularly rice, in many Asian countries increased prices to the

point where it suddenly became very profitable for large numbers of farmers to use fertilizer and other modern inputs.

### *AID and Foundations Help*

While some factors contributing to the takeoff in agriculture are of recent origin, others have been long in the making. The agricultural infrastructure is capable of supporting current advances because of several years of AID investment in farm-to-market roads, in irrigation projects, and in agricultural research and training. Investment in irrigation systems over the years provides a vast acreage of well-watered land, much of it well suited to the intensive use of modern farm technology. Adequate supplies of water and fertilizer are needed to attain high yields.

The training of some 4,000 Asian agriculturists over the past decade, sponsored jointly by AID, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the land grant universities, contributes to a corps of trained professionals capable of adapting and disseminating new technology.

The availability of fertilizer has increased severalfold over the past decade, partly as a result of expanding indigenous production and partly because of steadily rising imports. The financing of fertilizer imports is now a major AID activity, requiring a sizable portion of the agency's budget. Investment by fertilizer manufacturers and other supporting industries has helped to fuel the takeoff in agricultural production.

Countries in which U.S. firms have built or are building fertilizer plants include South Korea, the Philippines,

Taiwan, India, Iran, and Malaysia. Fertilizer produced in these plants could increase the region's annual food-producing capability by an estimated 25 million tons of grain. Other agrobusiness activities such as the manufacture of pesticides and farm equipment are also contributing to the rapid growth in food production.

Perhaps the most exciting development is the rapid spread of new, high-yielding varieties of cereals. The Mexican wheats now proving so adaptable throughout Asia are the product of more than twenty years of work by the Rockefeller Foundation. Efficient new rice varieties are coming principally from the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, an institution founded jointly by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations in 1962 and devoted solely to the improvement of rice production in the tropics and subtropics.

### *Using The New Seeds*

Work on high-yielding varieties of corn, sorghum, and millet is concentrated in India, where the Rockefeller Foundation is providing leadership for the programme. Areas planted to the new varieties went from a few hundred acres in 1964-65 to about 23,000 acres in 1965-66, nearly four million acres in 1966-67 and over twenty million acres during 1967-68, the crop year just ended. Plans and expectations indicate a further expansion of up to forty million acres in the coming year.

Several factors are responsible for this rapid gain in acreage. The new varieties often double yields of traditional varie-

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ties; their superiority is so obvious that farmers are quickly persuaded of their merits. This contrasts sharply with improved varieties made available in the past, which were only marginally superior to varieties being used.

Another reason is the degree to which the high yields attained on the experimental plots are transferable to field conditions. There are reports of instances in which farmers actually attained higher yields under field conditions with large acreages than researchers did on experimental plots.

The availability of these new seeds has enabled many Asian countries to shorten materially the agricultural development process. The importing of numerous varieties in small quantities for testing purposes was in itself an effort to achieve a shortcut; food-deficit countries availed themselves of the results of plant-breeding work undertaken elsewhere.

But they did not stop there. Once it was demonstrated that a given high-yielding variety was adapted to local growing conditions, large tonnages of seed were imported, thus eliminating the several years required to multiply and accumulate sufficient supplies of seed locally.

Pakistan imported 42,000 tons of seed wheat from Mexico during 1967, enough to plant 1.5 million acres. As a result, Pakistan now has enough seed to plant its entire wheat acreage to Mexican wheats. India imported 18,000 tons of Mexican wheats in 1966. This, coupled with indigenous multiplication of seed from the initial introduction of the same varieties, enabled Indian farmers to plant eight million acres this year—the target

acreage for 1970-71, and more than double the target of 3.5 million acres for the current year.

Turkey, starting later than India or Pakistan but determined to catch up, imported 21,000 tons of high-yielding wheat, including some U.S. varieties, for use on a much smaller acreage. Both the import of samples of the new varieties initially, and the larger shipments later, represent a massive infusion of a new technology at a nominal cost, with potentially widespread application. They constitute a windfall gain in food production for many of the less developed countries.

The new varieties possess several distinctive characteristics. They are almost all short-stemmed, so they can absorb large quantities of fertilizer without lodging (becoming top-heavy and falling down); they are much more responsive to fertilizer at all levels of application. A given amount of fertilizer produces a much greater increase in yield than with the older varieties of grain. And unlike high-yielding varieties of cereals developed in the United States or Japan for rather specific growing conditions, these varieties are adapted to a much broader range of latitudes.

The new varieties of rice are early maturing, ripening in 120 to 125 days compared with 150 to 180 days for the older varieties. They are also rather insensitive to the length of daylight and thus can be planted at any time of the year if the prevailing temperature and water supply permit. With adequate water, some farmers in the Philippines and India are harvesting two or even three crops each year. Where water supplies

are not sufficient to grow rice during the dry season, farmers grow high-yielding hybrid grain sorghums or hybrid corn.

Triple-cropping of rice, or rice in combination with sorghum or corn, is resulting in yields under field conditions as high as eight tons of grain per acre per calendar year. This contrasts with average yearly rice yields in Japan of just over two tons per acre and wheat yields in Europe of less than two tons per acre. The introduction of the early-maturing Mexican wheats in northern India and Pakistan is permitting the double-cropping of wheat and corn, with wheat grown during the *rabi* (winter) season and corn during the *kharif* (summer) season.

#### *Economic Impact : Inputs*

Introduction of the new varieties is changing not only the technology of production but also the economics. The potentially far-reaching economic implications of the agricultural revolution are only now becoming clear. Projected demand for agricultural inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides, water, and irrigation equipment must be recalculated.

Many of the assumptions underlying current strategies of agricultural development must also be re-examined. For example, in the short run, the profitability of using fertilizer will increase demand above what it would otherwise have been. Over the longer run, however, the demand for fertilizer may be lower than would otherwise be the case since a smaller amount of fertilizer will be required on the more responsive varieties to reach a given level of production.

#### *High Return on Investment*

High rates of return on investments in production inputs, reflecting a more favourable economic climate due to better prices for farm products and more efficient new technologies, are mobilizing rural savings not previously available for production purposes. Investment is on the rise not only in those things which increase output in the short run, such as fertilizer, but also in those which boost food-producing capability over the long run, such as tubewells and irrigation pumps.

Over the course of five years, Pakistani farmers in the cotton and rice-growing areas of the former Punjab, where the water table is quite near the surface, have installed some 32,000 private tubewells, costing from \$1,000 to \$2,500 each. The value of the supplementary irrigation made possible by these wells is such that farmers characteristically have paid for them in two years. A large proportion were installed without government assistance or subsidy of any kind. The number of low-lift pumps installed in East Pakistan, totalling 2,200 in 1965, is expected to increase to 14,000 by 1969, greatly increasing the potential for double-cropping rice during the dry season.

Similar high rates of return on small-scale irrigation investments are reported in India, where the number of wells is also climbing at an astronomical rate.

#### *New Equipment Needed*

Early-maturing varieties of rice which

ripen during the monsoon require mechanical drying before storage, since the time-honoured method of spreading rice in the roadside to dry is not feasible. The demand for grain-drying equipment, now climbing rapidly, was not anticipated.

Similarly, the use of pesticides, often uneconomic when average rice yields were 1,000 to 1,500 pounds of milled rice per acre, is suddenly very profitable on the new varieties, averaging 3,000 to 4,000 pounds. Growth in demand for both pesticides and application equipment such as knapsack sprayers and dusters will be closely associated with the spread of the improved seed.

The new varieties, with their potential for multiple-cropping, place a premium on fast preparation of the seedbed. Farmers planning to double-crop or triple-crop their land may no longer have several weeks to prepare the ground with bullocks or water buffalo; they may have to use power-driven farm equipment to prepare the seedbed quickly and plant the next crop. Even in some countries where new varieties are not yet widely spread, the profitability and feasibility of farm mechanization are being increasingly recognized.

In Thailand, where the movement of goods from farm to market is largely by canal or river, rice fields are prepared principally by water buffalo. Under these circumstances, farmers are discovering it is more economical to hire someone with a tractor to plough the rice fields for a few dollars per acre than to feed and care for a team of water buffalo all year just to use them during a few weeks at ploughing time. Some 20,000 to 25,000

imported tractors ploughed an estimated one-fourth of the rice acreage this past year, mostly on a custom-hire basis—not unlike the way in which wheat is harvested in the Great Plains of the United States.

#### *Rural Labour Better Used*

The more intensive farming methods associated with the new technology require more farm labour. The new varieties will not respond to the traditional practice of planting the crop and then virtually forgetting it until harvest time. Substantial amounts of additional labour must be invested in applying fertilizer, weeding, and the like.

Expansion of the area that can be multiple-cropped is also resulting in a more effective use of the rural labour supply, particularly during the dry season. In Asia, where underemployed labour constitutes one of the world's largest underutilized resources, this promises a major economic gain. For the first time, there is the possibility of significant labour scarcities in localized rural areas.

#### *Social Impact*

Changes associated with the new farm technology have a social as well as an economic impact. The exciting new cereal varieties are so superior to the traditional varieties and so dramatic in their impact that they are becoming "engines of change" wherever used. They may be to the agricultural revolution in Asia what the steam engine was to the industrial revolution in Europe.

*Break with Tradition*

Successful adoption of the new seed requires the simultaneous adoption of new cultural practices and the use of modern inputs. The seasonal rhythm of rural activity, once determined largely by the monsoon, is changing as farmers begin to double-crop and to introduce new combinations of crops. Farmers taking advantage of the new technology must enter the market; they cannot remain subsistence farmers. Rural Asians will change and innovate—when it is to their advantage to do so.

Significantly, there may be some spin-off from this breakthrough in agriculture, this initial break with tradition. Family planners should take heart. As farmers learn that they can indeed influence their destiny, they may become much more susceptible to family planning and other equally "radical" departures.

*New Socio-Economic Gap*

Not all changes wrought by the new technology are desirable. In some areas, tenants are being reduced to farm labourers as landowners discover the profitability of the new technology in the current economic setting. Even though income to the landless may rise, the socio-economic gap between the landowners and the landless may widen. Dissidents among the landless group in some states in India now form the nucleus of the opposition parties.

Among those who own land, the income gap between those owning fertile, well-watered land and those with mar-

ginal land is also likely to widen. While many of the former may easily triple or quadruple output, the latter may not be able to employ the new technology at all.

Those who can, and are thus permitted to enter the market, are likely to become more vocal and more interested in influencing the economic policies affecting their fortunes in the marketplace. Political activization of rural populations is an expected concomitant of the agricultural revolution now under way.

*Political Impact*

The leadership in most Asian countries is not unaware of the political implications of recent changes in rural areas. Prime Minister Demirel of Turkey feels strongly enough about the crash programme in wheat production, initiated at his behest less than two years ago, to have it directed and monitored from his office. Some observers think President Marcos of the Philippines, who has brought his country to self-sufficiency in rice by emphasizing rural development, may be the first President of the Philippines ever to be re-elected to office.

Former Prime Minister Maiwandwal of Afghanistan was so impressed with the production potential of the Mexican wheats and with the urgent need to arrest Afghanistan's growing dependence on imported wheat that he assessed each of the Ministries 2.5 per cent of its current year's development budget to create a fund to launch an accelerated wheat-production programme. Two years later, the Afghans appear to be progressing towards their goal of self-sufficiency in wheat.

President Ayub of Pakistan shows a deep personal interest in the agricultural programmes under way in his country and follows their progress on an almost daily basis. India's progressive C. Subramaniam, former Food and Agriculture Minister, took advantage of the food crisis to mobilize support for and launch the accelerated food-production effort responsible for much of India's gains.

Recent agricultural progress should not give cause for complacency. Many difficult problems lie ahead, especially in the fields of farm credit, water development, plant disease, foreign-exchange availability, marketing and price incentives.

#### *Credit Needed—And Water*

Purchases of farm inputs are often concentrated initially among the larger farmers who are able to finance their own purchases. The rate at which small farmers adopt new technologies is frequently determined by the availability of farm credit on reasonable terms.

If, like the great majority of Asian farmers, they are dependent on the local moneylender for credit, often at interest rates ranging from 20 to 100 per cent per year, they may not find it profitable to use modern inputs such as fertilizer. Available evidence indicates that fertilizer distribution in some parts of India and West Pakistan is beginning to slow because of a lack of credit.

Intensive cultivation of the new high-yielding varieties requires, in addition to an adequate supply of water, a far more sophisticated system of water control and management. At present not

more than one-third of Asia's rice land is considered suitable for the new, short-stemmed rice varieties.

Excessive and erratic flooding during the monsoon or rainy season is not conducive to the intensive cultivation of rice, which requires handweeding and the use of fertilizer and pesticides. Either too little or too much water can be damaging.

Associated with the massive introduction of exogenous varieties is the risk that some local insect or disease could suddenly wipe out the entire acreage, thus creating possible famine not unlike that occurring in Ireland more than a century ago. The worst of this threat may have passed, however, for the number of new varieties has already reduced dependence on any single one. Each year that passes should make the threat less dangerous.

Rice production during the dry season, once limited by the lack of varieties adapted to the off-season, is now limited by a lack of water. This can be remedied either by developing underground water resources, which are quite abundant in some areas, or by using pumps to lift water from the numerous rivers and canals that flow through many of the rice-growing areas during the dry season.

#### *And Foreign Exchange*

The exploitation of unused water resources will expand the acreage suitable for planting the high-yielding rices. Few, if any, developing countries are endowed with all the raw materials needed for manufacture of chemical fertilizers—phosphate rock, potash, sulphur, and

natural gas or naphtha.

As the use of fertilizer expands, many countries, chronically faced with a scarcity of foreign exchange, are hard pressed to find enough hard currency for the required imports. For some individual countries, such as India, this scarcity of foreign exchange could effectively reduce the rate of agricultural progress.

#### *Marketing Improvements Needed*

Frustrating though these problems may be, the dominant constraint on agricultural growth is likely to be inadequate marketing systems and an overall lack of markets. The recent emphasis on agricultural development has been concentrated on the expansion of production; marketing has been largely neglected, with the result that some of the promising gains made in production may be negated.

Over the past decade many of Asia's large coastal cities—Karachi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Colombo, and Djakarta—have become increasingly dependent on imported foodgrains. To become self-sufficient requires not only producing a surplus in the countryside sufficient to feed these cities, but also having a marketing system capable of moving rural surpluses to the cities when needed.

This means farm-to-market roads, storage facilities, and a market-intelligence system to rationalize the movement of commodities.

Several Asian countries, such as Pakistan, the Philippines, and Turkey, could produce exportable surpluses of grain within the next few years, joining Thailand and Burma. If they do, they must

develop the transport and storage facilities needed to move potentially large surpluses of grain from often remote rural areas into world markets. If exportable surpluses develop, there will be mounting pressure on Japan and the EEC countries—where cereal production is often subsidized at prices double the world market price—to reduce subsidies and permit imports.

#### *The Benefits : Enough Food*

Problem areas notwithstanding, an agricultural revolution is under way in Asia. The new cereal varieties provide a means for tapping some of the vast, but as yet largely unrealized, food-producing potential of the tropics and subtropics, putting them on a more competitive footing with the temperate-zone cereal producers. The agricultural breakthrough occurring in several major Asian countries can be repeated in Latin America and Africa.

Mexico, which once depended on imports for nearly half its wheat needs, is now exporting small quantities of both wheat and corn. Kenya, until recently a food-aid recipient, has produced an exportable surplus of corn, its food staple. Tunisia and Morocco are introducing the Mexican wheats. Much of the technology now being applied in Asia will also be applied in both Latin America and Africa, if the necessary top-level political support and proper combination of economic policies are forthcoming.

#### *More Purchasing Power*

The farm sector now constitutes from

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one-third to one-half of most Asian economies. It is conceivable that the 2 per cent rate of increase in food production prevailing during the early and mid-1960's could accelerate to 4 or 5 per cent yearly over the next few years, provided markets can absorb the additional output. The additional purchasing power thus generated for both production and consumer goods will stimulate a more rapid rate of growth in the non-farm sector.

The net effect should be a much more rapid rate of overall economic growth than would otherwise have prevailed. If the Asian agricultural revolution continues, it could well become the most significant world economic development since the economic rebirth of Europe following World War II.

This agricultural revolution is not the ultimate solution to the food-population problem, but it does buy some much needed additional time in which to mount effective family-planning programmes. If food scarcity lessens as anticipated in some of the major food-deficit countries, governments recently preoccupied with real or impending food crises can again turn their attention to the

business of development.

Although the need for food aid is likely to lessen sharply within the next few years, capital needed for investment in the agricultural infrastructure is certain to increase. The need for technical assistance seems likely to rise as the problems generated by dynamic movement in agriculture increase. The need for foreign private investment in agro-business will also rise sharply as farmers clamour for the inputs they need to take full advantage of the new genetic potentials available to them.

The positive economic effects of an agricultural takeoff in Asian countries are quite evident. What is not so readily realized is that it will bolster the confidence of national leaders in their ability to handle other seemingly insoluble problems. It may also strengthen their faith in modern technology and its potential for improving the well-being of their people.

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# LESSONS OF THE NUCLEAR AGE

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LOUIS J. HALLE

FOR CENTURIES, up to July 17, 1945, the power of weapons had been increasing at an exponential rate. That morning at 5:30, however, it took a quantum jump. The device that was exploded at Alamogordo, New Mexico, had two thousand times the blast-power of the largest bomb ever before used in the history of warfare. One despairs of recapturing for a new generation the awe and the terror we felt at the time before an event that seemed to spell the doom of mankind.

Barring a few insiders, all any of us knew at first about this monstrous device was that it could destroy a city in a flash.

As far as we knew, any garage-mechanic would now be able to manufacture it in his own cellar, any maniac could carry it in his vest-pocket. What defence could civilization have against such a weapon?

Even when the nightmare of the homemade vest-pocket device had been dissipated, the potentialities of the real bomb, as reported by the scientists who had invented it, were such as to lead to the conclusion that this was not a weapon mankind could live with. If it were not abolished or somehow proscribed as a weapon in national armaments, while there was still time, mankind had little chance of an acceptable future.

The eminent physicist, Dr. Edward U. Condon (then Director of the National

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Bureau of Standards in Washington) told us:

*In the insecurity of a world of national atomic armaments, every bit of metal carried by every incoming foreign traveller will have to be inspected in a laborious and sophisticated way.... The beginning of a new war will surely involve not only the launching of the missiles, but the explosion of the mines that have been secretly set near key targets....*

This warning represented the authoritative opinion of the day. Nevertheless, twenty-two years later we see that it was wrong. Today we do live in a world of "national atomic armaments," and the bomb has become thousands of times more powerful, and we have had quite a few new wars. Happily, however, the consequences Dr. Condon foresaw have not been realized.

The implication of predictions like this, which were altogether plausible in 1946, was that abolition or control of the bomb required the nations of the world to give up some part of their sovereignty forthwith, and to submit themselves to a world government that would police mankind, prevent any further wars, and hold a monopoly of atomic energy to be used for peaceful purposes only. An approach to this objective, at least, was what lay behind the Baruch Report to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission in 1946—this, rather than a Machiavellian plot (as some alleged) to steal a march on Stalin and get the Cold War started.

Today we can be sure of one thing. The problem, from the beginning, was not that

of abolishing or uninventing nuclear weapons. It was, rather, that of learning to live with them—as it still is.

### *The Idea of Total War*

One reason why we thought that the survival of civilization depended on the abolition of the bomb was our assumption that any new war would bring it into play. We believed that any new war would bring it into play because we assumed that any new war would be a total war in which the belligerents would use every weapon in their armories that might prevent defeat and contribute to victory. In 1945, as World War II drew to its end, the American Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, said: "We can be certain that the next war, if there is one, will be even more total than this one."

Happily this prediction, too, was wrong. For there have been quite a few new wars since it was made, and they have not been "even more total" than World War II, and they have not brought the terrible new armaments into play at all.

Our belief, in the beginning, was that nuclear weapons were more usable than in fact they have proved to be. In the absence of experience, an abstract reasoning made it easy to believe that a sovereign state with nuclear weapons, having a quarrel with another sovereign state (let us say over a canal connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea), would blow the other state off the map with nuclear bombs rather than accept defeat.

It was equally plausible that Nuclear State A, having a quarrel with State B, would smuggle some bombs into B's cities —perhaps in the holds of ships, if the

cities were coastal—and then tell it that unless it surrendered forthwith its cities would vanish in so many mushroom clouds.

Today we can see, as we could not then, that there is a complex of reasons why the uses of nuclear weapons are severely limited, why they cannot be made to serve as all-purpose weapons for all occasions. A weapon may simply be too powerful for use on the actual occasions of conflict that arise in reality. I can use my open right hand on a child who refuses to eat his spinach, but I cannot use a revolver.

*The first lesson of the nuclear age, then, is that the uses of a nuclear armament for actual combat are severely limited—so limited as to be almost non-existent.*

The discovery that nuclear weapons are too powerful for actual use in almost any situation that arises is closely associated with another lesson of the nuclear age. In the mid-1940's we had all assumed that any new war would be a total war. What this represented was a long-established and virtually unquestioned attitude towards war and peace.

We assumed that there were two alternative and mutually exclusive states of being. The normal state was one of peace. In this state, international relations were conducted through foreign offices and corps of diplomats, while the military men, like firemen between fires, spent their time exercising or playing cards. However, when the state of peace gave way, as it occasionally did, to the alternative state of war, the diplomats retired while the generals and admirals took over and addressed themselves, in each belligerent nation, to the irreducible objective

of victory. That objective achieved or lost, and the war over, the diplomats emerged from retirement to take command again.

In this established conception, war was properly total. Once a state resorted to it, or was thrown into it by an attack, it would have been shameful for it to allow the political schemes of the scheming politicians to interfere with the achievement of the irreducible objective. It would have been shameful for it to "pull its punches" in the hope of some negotiated political compromise. "In war," said General MacArthur, "there is no substitute for victory."

This either-or conception, of absolute peace or absolute war, explains why the American military authorities made their war plans, after 1945, only for the contingency of a third world war.

#### *The Logic of Survival*

Until the 1950's, the term "limited war" was hardly in the military lexicon of the West at all. It was certainly not in common use, although the historians may have applied it, often nostalgically, to the quaint wars of the eighteenth century. Consequently, the United States was not conceptually prepared to fight the kind of war that it did find itself fighting in Korea.

The either-or concept was one of the factors that led us Americans to reduce our ground forces so drastically. If any new war would inevitably be a total war, fought with the big nuclear armaments, then it was plausible that the role of these old-fashioned conventional forces would be secondary. Victory or defeat would be

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decided in the air. Britain, too, sacrificed ground forces for nuclear power, only to find that nuclear power was useless to meet her obligations east of Suez and in Germany.

We were all quite wrong in our expectations, and *the second lesson of the nuclear age, which stems from the first, is that the only kind of war that can be contemplated in the nuclear age is limited war.* If nations cannot use their most powerful armaments for actual combat, it follows quite simply that they cannot fight a total war.

This second lesson conforms to a principle that, in addition to being supported by a simple logic, is exemplified in the fighting behaviour of vertebrates generally. While all-out conflict may be consonant with limited weapons, unlimited weapons require that conflict be limited.

This principle, in its application to vertebrates, has been exemplified in the writings of Dr. Konrad Lorenz and discussed in a scholarly fashion by Dr. Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, who points out that fighting among vertebrates of the same species almost never ends in death and rarely results in serious injury to either combatant. The reason is that, while species without deadly weapons, such as pigeons with their soft bills and weak feet, may fight each other all-out, those that have the means to do each other mortal injury never fight all-out. Male rattlesnakes, which can kill each other with a single bite, never bite each other in their combats.

*The two snakes [Dr. Eibl-Eibesfeldt writes] glide along, side by side, each with the forward third of its length*

*raised in the air. In this posture they push head against head, each trying to force the other sideways and to the ground. . . . The successful snake pins the loser for a moment with the weight of his body and then lets the loser escape.*

The loser accepts the verdict, and so the dominance of the winner is established.

### *Behavioural Inhibitions*

This behaviour has had striking parallels in the behaviour of nations since the nuclear age began. While the United States and the Soviet Union, in the great conflict between them, have had the ability to kill each other with one bite, they have shown an instinctive inhibition against biting—an inhibition greater than ever before in history.

In Berlin during the winter of 1948-49, and again in the winter of 1958-59, and again in 1961, the confrontation of Russia and the West was like that of the two snakes who push against each other head to head but refrain from biting. Both sides used tear-gas bombs freely, but never the nuclear bombs that each also had available.

This parallel between the behaviour of vertebrates and the behaviour of nations is not merely metaphoric. Precisely the same logic as applies to the one applies to the other. It has, by genetic evolution, endowed rattlesnakes with certain behavioural inhibitions conducive to their survival as a species; for they would quickly become extinct if they did not have these inhibitions. In the case of

nations, the governing logic, directly appreciated, inspires behavioural inhibitions conducive to the survival of the human species.

We have found that nuclear weapons are virtually unusable in combat, and that the wars of the nuclear age must therefore be limited. The only time that nuclear weapons actually have been used in combat was in the context of an essentially unlimited war that had begun in the pre-nuclear age, when unlimited wars were still practicable. But this is a situation that could never arise again—unless, of course, it were possible to abolish nuclear weapons, in which case an unlimited war might start and lead, again, to the production of the nuclear weapons that would be used to end it.

To say that nuclear weapons are virtually unusable in combat, however, is not to say that they are unusable as a contingent threat in diplomacy. When we refer to national nuclear armaments as "deterrents" we indicate that they are, in fact, usable in diplomacy.

A wise Frenchman recently remarked that his country's so-called *force de frappe* (a term translated from the English "striking force") was misnamed, that it should have been called *force de dissuasion* (after the English "deterrent force"), since it could be used to deter but it could not possibly be used to strike.

There is, here, a paradox to which we shall have to return. For the moment we may simply note that nuclear armaments have proved less useful than expected even in diplomacy. The practice of what we too crudely call "nuclear blackmail" has not had a history of success.

During the first half of the 1950's, when

Moscow was in the process of developing a great nuclear armament of its own, the best minds in the West laboured under dire forebodings because of an altogether plausible logic that they applied to the approaching future. Up to then there had seemed to be a sort of balance of power in the Cold War.

On the one hand, it was thought that the American nuclear monopoly deterred the Red Army from marching to the English Channel. On the other hand, the overwhelming superiority of the Red Army to the ground forces opposing it in Europe deterred the United States from using its nuclear armament against Russia, for that (as the Russians warned) might be expected to provoke the occupation of West Europe by the Red Army. The situation, then, was one of mutual deterrence.

#### *An Ominous Campaign*

However, once Russia had acquired a nuclear armament of its own to deter, by itself, the American nuclear armament, what would then prevent the Red Army from marching on to the Channel with impunity?

Surely the balance of power would then have been decisively upset in favour of the Russians, and as a matter of simple realism the change would have to be registered in a series of diplomatic concessions to Moscow. The West would no longer be able to defend Berlin because its nuclear armament would be rendered unusable by the Russian nuclear armament, which could retaliate in kind for any nuclear attack, while the Western ground forces would not be able to stand

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up against the now undeterred Communist ground forces.

Under these rapidly approaching circumstances, diplomatic pressure by Moscow should alone suffice to compel the abandonment by the West of Berlin—and perhaps of Turkey, and then Greece, and an indefinite succession of other positions besides.

It is clear that the men in Moscow saw the same prospect. After the mid-1950's, as their nuclear capacity grew, they began with increasing assurance to practise a diplomacy of nuclear threat. Russia's first *Sputnik* (launched on October 4, 1957) demonstrated that the Russians had stolen a march on the Americans, getting ahead of them in the development of long-range missiles for the delivery of nuclear warheads. Within a week Moscow began to raise an outcry about an alleged plot whereby Turkey, as cat's-paw for the United States, was to attack Syria, a Russian protegee at the time.

On October 9, Khrushchev told James Reston of *The New York Times* that if war broke out over Syria,

*we are near Turkey and you [the United States] are not. When the guns begin to fire the missiles can begin flying, and then it will be too late to think about it.*

On October 12, he wrote a letter to the British Labour Party (and *mutatis mutandis* to the respective socialist parties of the other European members of NATO) in which he said:

*One cannot ignore the fact that Britain is a member of the North*

*Atlantic bloc, and a military gamble by Turkey and the United States against Syria would in effect predetermine Britain's participation in it. Any extension of the conflict around Syria may plunge Britain into a new devastating war, with all its terrible consequences for the population of the British Isles.*

This was the beginning of an ominous campaign to break up the North Atlantic alliance by detaching countries like Britain that supposedly lay, now, at the mercy of the new Russian nuclear armament.

It did not succeed, and perhaps Moscow concluded that the attempt had been premature. A year later (in November 1958), it renewed its campaign of nuclear diplomacy, this time with an air of absolute assurance.

On November 27, Khrushchev issued his famous ultimatum, which in effect gave the Western allies just six months to get out of Berlin. In abstract terms it seemed reasonable that the allies, taking the new calculus of power into account, should retreat from Berlin; for they no longer had the military means to defend it, and any attempt to do so seemed likely to lead to their own destruction and, perhaps, the destruction of Berlin as well.

Now, however, a curious thing happened. The Western allies did not obey the dictates of reason. They stood firm, announcing their intention not to retreat. Faced with this stubbornness, Khrushchev at last decided to give himself more time, and in March 1959 he withdrew his ultimatum. In 1961, Khrushchev renewed his ultimatum, and set off the series of demonstrative nuclear explo-

sions that culminated in one estimated at fifty-seven megatons—only to withdraw it again when again the West proved intransigent.

### *Bounds of Credibility*

What this experience shows is that if a weapon is virtually unusable in combat, then the threat to use it will lack credibility, and to the degree that it lacks credibility it will be limited in its effectiveness. *So the third lesson of the nuclear age is that a nuclear armament is of highly limited use in diplomacy.*

Since the diplomatic effectiveness of the nuclear armament is limited by its credibility, we are brought to ask what are the limits of its credibility. By now we all know the answer. When a nuclear power threatens to use its nuclear armament in response to an aggression that would imminently endanger its very survival, its threat will be more credible than if it should threaten to use that armament in response to some remote provocation by which its vital interests are not directly endangered.

There is a basic principle that applies here: the greater the stakes, the less the risk that can be accepted. Where one stands to lose one's life, one cannot take as big a gamble as where one stands to lose only a dollar bill.

Although we agree that there are virtually no situations in which a nuclear power would be rationally justified in firing off its nuclear armament, situations might easily arise in which one could not be quite sure that such a power would not do so nevertheless. In such a situation, the power that was contemplating an act

of provocation might feel almost certain, but not quite certain, that it would not thereby set off a nuclear war. And, where the survival of one's own society was at stake, even a slight uncertainty would have a powerful inhibiting effect.

Uncertainty is the great deterrent. By virtue of it, governments are, in the final test, deterred from extreme acts of provocation. So nuclear armaments, as the Cold War has proved, are powerful influences for keeping the peace. This is their diplomatic use. They serve this purpose simply by their passive presence on the scene.

If nuclear armaments are effective for the maintenance of the status quo, they are ineffective for upsetting it. The basic situation at Berlin was that Moscow was using its nuclear threat in an attempt to upset the status quo, while the West, also with a nuclear armament, was defending it.

In a nuclear confrontation the challenger is at a disadvantage simply because he is the one taking the initiative: because it is his move. He, rather than the defender, is the one who, if he carries out his threat, takes the action that might set off the nuclear fireworks. Consequently, when the moment for that action comes, he is likely to have second thoughts.

*A fourth lesson of the nuclear age, then, is that the presence of nuclear armaments in the world's landscape has tended to strengthen the status quo.*

This is illustrated by the fact that the fantastic territorial anomalies left at the end of World War II, which no one expected to last more than a few weeks or months, are still with us almost a generation later. Korea is still divided.

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Germany is still divided. West Berlin is still an enclave a hundred miles inside hostile territory.

Since the great confrontation began, every attempt to upset the essential status quo between the two camps by an abrupt use of force or the threat of force has failed. The attempts from each side to overcome the division of Korea by force failed. The three Russian attempts to get the West out of Berlin failed. The attempt to mount Russian power in Cuba failed. The attempt to seize the Suez Canal failed.

We should recognize at this point that the advent of nuclear armaments is only one among several factors that have been tending increasingly throughout this century to limit the possibilities of using force, or the threat of force, to bring about abrupt changes in the status quo. It is, however, a factor of the first importance.

### *Deterrence and Status Quo*

The solidifying of the status quo by nuclear armaments is a consequence of the fact that their only function is deterrence. And deterrence does not create change, it prevents change.

In the old days it was assumed that a nation's military security depended largely on defence, on the military ability to stop an invading force. This is part of the reason why we got into such a panic when nuclear weapons first appeared on the scene. For it was in everyone's mind that no defence against these weapons was possible. But deterrence has always been a better alternative to defence, since it prevents any attack at all rather than

stopping an attack already begun. The experience of twenty-two years shows that this better alternative has been immensely strengthened by the advent of nuclear armaments.

Deterrence has always been primary in the domain of military security, although never before practised so consciously and explicitly. The balance of power, to which the world has looked in times past for peace and stability, has in fact been nothing but a system of mutual deterrence. In a constellation of rival states with claims against each other, or with ambitions that could be fulfilled only at each other's expense, each has been deterred from aggression against the others by the spectacle of the power that would oppose it.

In the pre-nuclear age, however, we all knew that only a multilateral balance of power could be stable, that a bipolar balance was like a chair with only two legs.

The logic of this was that, in a balance-of-power situation involving many independent centres of power, there were possibilities of adjustment that tended to prevent any one power from upsetting the balance. An increase of weight by one power could be compensated for by shifting the weights of others against it. But such adjustment is not possible in a confrontation of two powers only. There are no supplementary weights to rectify the balance. Therefore as soon as one of the two powers gains a distinct advantage over the other the balance is definitively upset.

With this logic in mind, we were naturally alarmed after 1945 by the development of a bipolar balance between the two superpowers and their respective

associates. It was under the circumstances of this bipolar confrontation that the arms race got under way, and one could plausibly ask how it could end in anything but the destruction of half the world. During the last years of the 1950's we lived in the terror that an acute enough crisis, say over Berlin, would eventuate in a surprise disarming attack by one side against the other.

### *Bipolar Stability?*

Then, however, the situation began to improve. Each side began to feel itself more secure. The bipolar balance began to seem less unstable. What had happened was that both sides had been able to achieve protection for their respective nuclear panoplies by putting them under the ground or under the sea.

After that it was evident that a surprise disarming attack would not disarm its victim, who would retain, still, the means of cataclysmic retaliation. Neither side could expect to destroy the other, then, without being destroyed itself. In direct contradiction of the traditional principles upon which our minds had been formed, a bipolar stability ensued.

What had changed the classical situation was the advent of "absolute" weapons. Nuclear armaments are "absolute" weapons. Nuclear armaments are "absolute" in the sense that they have the capacity for extinguishing any organized society, no matter how big, at one blow. Between such absolute armaments—as between a big and a little rattlesnake, each of which can kill the other with one bite—the balance of power is bound to remain perfect regard-

less of limited increments on one side or the other. If two men stand with pistols at each other's temples, their fingers on the triggers, the balance between them is perfect even though one pistol is a .45 while the other is only a .22.

*The fifth lesson of the nuclear age, then, is that, where the power on either side is absolute, a bipolar balance is relatively stable.*

One cannot say that it is absolutely stable. There is the theoretical possibility, at least, of some sensational scientific or technological "breakthrough," such as the development by one side of an effective defence against massive nuclear attack. However, although this would destabilize it in theory—let us say, in games-theory—it seems likely that the element of uncertainty, together with other inhibitions on the use of nuclear weapons, might ensure that it would not be seriously destabilized in practice.

It is not implausible that, in a nuclear environment, the classical situation has been completely reversed: that a bipolar balance of power is stable, while a multi-lateral balance would be unstable or less stable. Is it not precisely the apprehension of this that makes us worry, today, about the possibility of nuclear proliferation?

### *Need for Diplomacy*

In summary, the five main lessons that may be drawn from the experience of living with nuclear weapons are:

1. *that nuclear weapons are virtually unusable in combat;*
2. *that in a nuclear environment wars must be limited;*

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3. that the usefulness of nuclear armaments in diplomacy is limited to deterrence and defence of the status quo;
4. that nuclear weapons have, consequently, strengthened the status quo; and
5. that in a nuclear environment a bipolar balance of power may have a greater stability than the classical balances of the pre-nuclear age.

Of these five interrelated lessons, the one we should concentrate on and develop in all its implications is the second, that wars must be limited. We can feel no assurance that they will in fact be limited, because the existence of nuclear armaments does not, in itself, automatically limit them. There is always the possibility that a nation or a ruler might go too far beyond the bounds of prudence, that diplomatic "brinkmanship" might end in loss of control.

Therefore, in order to keep our wars limited hereafter, we shall have to develop the concepts, the modalities, and the institutions required to keep them from going out of control.

These concepts, modalities, and institutions are all those that contribute to the maintenance of reciprocal understanding between the opposed parties in a limited war. The parties must have a tacit if not an explicit understanding about going too close to the brink of an all-out war. And they must have means of communicating with each other intelligibly and meaningfully when it becomes necessary to draw back from the brink—as in the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962.

I have already noted that the old concept of total war was of a situation in which the military men replaced the diplomatic policymakers at the levers of command. In limited war, however, the diplomatic policymakers have to remain in full and active command. For the parties to a limited war use military force essentially as an instrument of diplomacy for the realization of diplomatically attainable objectives. This means that diplomatic negotiation between the antagonists should, if possible, be going on concurrently with the fighting, or at the least that diplomatic contact between them should not be lost.

### *The Problem of Communication*

The whole history of the Korean war, until it was at last brought under control, is a history of the failure of communication. For it was not intended or desired by any of the parties to it; it came about and was continued and enlarged purely because of successive failures of communication between the two sides.

*The sixth and last lesson to be set down here, then, is that in the nuclear age it is even more important to have good communication between antagonists than between allies.*

This was recognized after the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. During that crisis President Kennedy and Prime Minister Khrushchev had communicated with each other through diplomatic channels that required several hours for the transmission of each message. By contrast, missiles carrying thermonuclear warheads could span the distance in a few minutes. It was conceivable that, in

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another crisis, both nations would be destroyed unless the words travelled faster than the missiles. Consequently, the so-called "hot line" was set up as a rapid-communications link between Moscow and Washington. It has since demonstrated its utility by the use that President Johnson and Premier Kosygin made of it during the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967.

Similar communications links have now been set up between Paris and Moscow and between London and Moscow. We may reasonably look forward to the day when there are hot lines running from the Western capitals to Peking as well.

When the nuclear age first burst upon us, it seemed as if nothing short of a miracle could save human civilization from a terrible doom. Now, however, we have lived with nuclear weapons for over twenty-two years. We have seen how they have tended to keep wars limited. We have seen how they have, for the most part, kept the Cold War cold. We have seen how they have produced a certain stability in the balance of power, and how they have tended to stabilize international relations as a

whole.

This is not to deny the danger that still persists, the danger against which we must take all possible measures, the danger by which we must constantly govern our thinking. It is hard to believe that mankind has been rising in consciousness, understanding, and vision for a million years only to go smash in the end. But accidents happen that cut off the most promising lives of individuals, and cataclysmic disaster brought on by itself has often been the lot of mankind. It is precisely because we have so much reason to look forward to a larger future that we should cultivate an understanding of the factors that make for the limitation of conflict.

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# BOOK WORLD

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New York: Macmillan Company. 322pp.

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*Reviewed by Charles L. Sanford*

Man trod the earth on foot for a million years; within the last fifty years he has found himself inhabiting a largely artificial environ-

ment which hurtles him into the future at escape velocity.

The meaning of this discovery has been the subject of anxious inquiry, producing awesome titles such as *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, *The Modern Temper*, *The Decline*

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*of the West*—all acknowledging that something has gone awry which we had not foreseen or intended in the triumphant progress of science and technology. But now, as the apocalypse continues to be postponed, a new, more hopeful note begins to sound in some of the recent works on this subject reviewed below.

In general, critics of the modern temper have been traditionalists: defenders of a religious orthodoxy which is no longer viable or of a passing way of life; members of a vanishing elite; moralists who "view with alarm" an apparent decline from former standards; and alienated intellectuals, poets, and artists who fancy that they speak for a universal human condition. It is necessary to review briefly their indictment of modernism in order to perceive more clearly what is fresh or original in the works under scrutiny here.

Their argument, delivered sometimes in a tone of querulousness, sometimes with a maddening unction or ironic detachment, goes something like this: Our all-encompassing dedication in Western nations to such goals and values as humanitarianism, material success, progress, and happiness is shallow, touching only superficially our deepest lives, which are concerned, ultimately, with the archetypal human experience of birth, maturation, loving, suffering, begetting, and dying. Humanitarian science may disguise the human condition, may prolong our lives, may delude us into believing we are demigods—but basically changes nothing.

#### *Doom Unless . . .*

Some of the same critics have argued that modern science and technology, through the mechanisms of the marketplace, have destroyed the quality and continuity of human existence by sundering us from nature, rendering us into objects for statistical study and manipulation, fragmenting the community

into islands of specialization, and delivering whatever remains of our sense of dignity and uniqueness over to the mercy of an impoverished, conformist mass culture. In this mood the critics seem to be saying, in short, that man is doomed. Unless . . .

Unless he returns to God; unless he destroys his machinery and cities and revives his ancient reverence for nature; unless somehow, anyhow, he restores the old balance between thought and feeling, action and belief; unless he recovers a tragic sense of human grandeur in the face of mortal limitations; unless an aristocracy of talent and sensitivity rediscovers its responsibility to lead the leaderless masses. Etc.

The words "revive," "restore," "recover," and "rediscover" which one finds so often in this literature assume an earlier, healthier condition of being whose definitions are still binding and worthy of being acted upon if we are to survive at all. They further assume the position so often condemned in shallow humanitarianism—namely, that man is capable of saving himself by an act of pure willingness. These assumptions beg the questions whether mankind was ever, in historical fact, better situated; whether new definitions are not needed in the present circumstances; and whether human reason, even in a respected elite, is capable of willing destiny.

The consensus of critical opinion, in any event, has lately shifted from one of contempt or hatred of scientific rationalism for its lack of relevance to the human condition to a desire to understand its profound influence as a major factor of accelerated social change affecting even man's conception of himself.

This shift of interest and emphasis is being expressed in a flood of extremely interesting books and essays which, in the main, seem to call for new definitions to fit an unprecedented turn in human affairs. I shall begin by considering first those works which seem to me to reflect some of the anguish and con-

fusion of our time, and then move on to those which seem to achieve greater insight or perspective.

#### *A Conservative View*

Russell Kirk, since the publication of his widely read book, *The Conservative Mind*, has been a leader in making the philosophy of conservatism respectable in a country noted for—or at least boastful of—its liberal tradition. He is not a “pseudo-conservative,” as Richard Hofstadter styles extremists who followed Senator Joseph McCarthy and Barry Goldwater, but rather a proponent of mild, Whiggish nineteenth-century liberalism who has forcibly reminded us that our so-called liberal tradition is conservatively based on a respect for Christian faith, constitutional law, and humane letters.

In his latest book, *The Intemperate Professor*, Russell Kirk draws an important distinction between “human,” “humanitarian,” and “humane,” once again reminding us that to be dedicated to progress is not necessarily to be “liberal.” Thus, he finds American businessmen very human and often humanitarian in their philanthropies and social concern, but not very “humane,” meaning that our businessmen have tended to neglect the most important business of life, which is to cultivate creative imagination and richness of personality in an age of massive technology.

Most of Kirk’s heroes belong to the nineteenth century in spirit. These would include Edmund Burke, John Henry Newman, John Stuart Mill, George Santayana, Irving Babbitt, Ludwig Van der Rohe Mies, Sidney Hook, and all those who genuflect before Truth, Beauty, Faith, and Free Enterprise Rightly Understood—oh! and Moral Standards.

Kirk’s villains belong to the century in spirit: so-called liberal professors and clergymen, “the flabby clerisy of a sensate time”;

the two prophets of scientific utopianism, H. G. Wells and C. P. Snow; Freud and Marx; governmental and foundation bureaucrats; city planners who create “hygienic slums” in the name of urban renewal; and of course the vulgar masses who are said by Ortega y Gasset to have revolted against their betters and overthrown the brief reign of Truth, Beauty, Faith, and Moral Standards. Kirk almost cheerfully throws up his hands, consigning the future to a modern barbarism of “utilitarian ugliness,” created originally by the industrial revolution.

“This is my case,” Kirk exclaims quite fearlessly: “there ought to be inequality of condition in the world. For without inequality, there is no class; without class, no manners and no beauty...” And without beauty, no civilization. Now all this strikes one in a vein similar to Hodding Carter’s recent lament for the American South’s loss of much charm, beauty, and inspiration since the advent of the militant new Negro. It fails to persuade because one understands it as an expression of personal feeling.

Kirk’s splenetics in this book thus create a lively sense of personality, which he says is being extinguished, but do not constitute a thoughtful and observant commentary upon the nature of society.

#### *Irrational Politics*

While Kirk’s rhetoric proclaims him to be the quintessential free and noble spirit at bay against a doctrinaire, collectivist liberalism, his underlying stance is quite as frozen as that of the liberal professors he describes. Nor would one learn from Kirk that many thoughtful liberals are quite as conscious of the dilemmas of modern liberalism, wanting technology to serve the ends of humane culture, but lacking the symbols and organizing force of either Christianity or capitalism.

Another source of irony in this confron-

tation is that leading liberals today often feel that conservatism is in the saddle. This is the deeper meaning, for instance, of Richard Hofstadter's *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*, which suggests that right-wing extremists in this country enjoy an influence far out of proportion to their actual numbers.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning historian examines the Free Silver issue of the nineties, the imperialistic adventure in the Philippines, the antitrust movement, and the McCarthy-Goldwater phenomenon as expressions of the non-rational side of politics and human behaviour.

In the best of times, people respond less to reason than to "striking symbolic acts or memorable statements," particularly when these are expressed by charismatic public figures. Under great stress, very many Americans, especially those from rural backgrounds, become extremely susceptible to a conspiratorial view of events which presents them with ready-made devils and scapegoats upon whom to blame their troubles and vent their aggression and frustrations.

This symbolism, according to Hofstadter, is deeply ingrained in American character, fusing a background of religious fundamentalism with the secular sense of national destiny, and expressing, in the main, a conservative rural revolt against modernity. Propagandists instinctively understand this and work within this framework.

#### *The Starved Spirit*

It is now necessary to turn to Jacques Ellul's book, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, for a treatment in depth of what may be the most significant cultural phenomenon of our time. Ellul, Professor of the History of Law and Social History at the University of Bordeaux, maintains that we are living in the age of total propaganda as a necessary consequence of the technological

society. At some point in time between the two wars, he believes, Western society made an unprecedented historical leap which replaced the natural milieu and traditional culture and values increasingly with a technological milieu having intrinsic laws of its own.

This was the thesis of his earlier work, *The Technological Society*, which spread his growing reputation as a social philosopher to this country. Frequently criticized for its technological determinism, *The Technological Society* was actually written as a warning "of what may happen if man does not come to understand what is happening and makes no attempt to control the situation."

In the present work, which extends this view, propaganda is defined as the chief means by which technique "massifies" society. Its practitioners are a sort of aristocracy of technicians led by publicists, management engineers, and so-called human relations experts who typify the new leadership of our time. To the extent that their efforts are successful, says Ellul, results do not significantly differ in democratic and totalitarian regimes: in both, the individual will have been integrated in masses of people who have lost their freedom of thought and action without realizing it.

Are we, then, innocent victims of a vast, pulverizing machine? Not at all, says Ellul. One of his most original insights is that modern man living in his technological jungle needs, craves, hungers for propaganda —propaganda to fill his spiritual emptiness, once off the job; propaganda to "explain" the astonishingly incoherent, absurd, and irrational flux of events which the mass media constantly and immediately bring to his attention from around the world; propaganda to appease his terrible loneliness by integrating him with others; propaganda to make him feel more important through meaningful group participation; propaganda,

above all, which will provide a merciful release from guilt and anxiety through justification.

Intellectuals, contrary to common belief, are especially susceptible, says Ellul, because they have to absorb vast quantities of second-hand information and are more keenly aware of the existential predicament. We, each one of us, is to blame for not realizing our extreme vulnerability to modern, total propaganda and doing something about it.

There is much in Ellul's book to exasperate an American reader. So much depends, for example, on its original premises, so little really on empirical evidence or the tracing of direct causal relationships. As a people, we are more accustomed to empirical studies of a single, limited subject.

Ellul attempts nothing less than an intellectual grasp of his subject in terms of the configurations of whole societies. One result is the effect, at least, of dissolving all human communication into a great sea of propaganda from which there can be no escape. Then, too, Ellul's tone is often patronizing and self-opinionated, as if to say that nobody—and certainly not the specialists on the subject—has really understood propaganda until now.

In fact, the basic principle of all propaganda is well understood, and Ellul says little that is new apart from identifying different kinds of propaganda as they function within a broad social context. Much of the book must be taken as an expression of Ellul's monumental distaste for technological civilization, his underlying moral indignation concealed beneath the mantle of a modern Machiavelli.

#### *A New Humanism*

"The modern world is a Machiavellian world." These are the words of Italy's distinguished novelist, Alberto Moravia, whose

collection of essays, *Man as an End*, is for the first time available to this country in English. One cannot but marvel at their precision without sacrifice of nuance, their grace and wit without loss of depth, and the mature, unifying vision evident even in notebook fragments.

These essays show Moravia to be as committed as Russell Kirk to humanism in a time of antihumanism, but without Kirk's peevishness and snobbish contempt for the masses. Moravia also shares Ellul's profoundly disaffected view of technological society, and his analysis is quite as penetrating in smaller compass; yet his power of reasoning does not lead logically to a dead end as with Ellul, and his declaration of faith in man does not ring hollow. Though he is obviously at home with scholarly abstractions, he conveys his insights most often in the metaphors of daily experience. By comparison, Ellul seems a humourless Kantian pedant.

In all his essays, most of which concern the problematical relationship of art and artists to society, Moravia seems to be saying that the arts provide a more reliable diagnosis and cure for the world's ills than the social sciences, because the arts alone are anchored in the abysses of experience which bring renewal.

Moravia's lead essay begins with a little fable about two ways of building a road. One is a roundabout way which respects human beings and beauties of the landscape; the other follows the principle of rational technological efficiency. He connects the latter with the way of Machiavelli in politics and the Marquis de Sade in love, both of whom linked their subjects to abstract reason, to political science and technique; with secularized religions which strip man of his sacred character in order to preach racial "truths," class "truths," State "truths"; with people who use others as mere things like soldier

ants, vegetables, bricks, or fertilizer; with urban renewal and all the many familiar ways of planning characteristic of technological society.

From this little fable, Moravia derives such ironic postulates as: "The only truly rational means is violence," "Only madmen make use of reason," and "We are all Christians; even Hitler was a Christian." Thus, he does not argue a thesis; he makes it a palpable, living, breathing thing summoned to account for itself after the manner of art.

The rest of his essay is a tentative, cautious approach to a new humanism. This depends, first, upon his observation that modern Machiavellianism is not deliberate, but exists only because the basis for a non-Machiavellian politics is currently lacking; secondly, upon a profound insight expressed metaphorically in the statement, "Even if you burn man, he will always leave a residue." That "residue" is the existential suffering, the feeling of waste and absurdity, when man is used as a *means*.

In order to negate the equation, suffering>equals-existence, Moravia calls for a new conception of man, and this to be followed by remaking the world to man's true measure: small centres of habitation fitted to his capacity to move, see, embrace, and understand; a worldwide civilization suited to his capacity to relate to ideas and moral values. Moravia's humanism is imbued with a firm moral vision, but he is not a traditional moralist or conservative, and his proposal for remaking our cities into small centres should not be confused with a conservative retreat to rural bliss.

#### *Theology without Illusions*

At first sight, it may seem strange to juxtapose the name of Italian novelist Alberto Moravia with that of the American theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr. In his latest work,

*Man's Nature and His Communities*, Niebuhr attacks both idealistic and materialistic philosophies, defends his theology with insights and jargon borrowed from the social sciences, and considers that neither communism nor socialism offers a means of redemption relevant to the Western democracies, which have now eliminated the injustices of early industrialism.

And yet Niebuhr is closer in outlook to Moravia in a fundamental sense than to other writers of the group under consideration. Both writers take for their point of departure a disillusioned view of human nature, and attempt to salvage from the postwar rubble in the cold dawn of modern doubt some shreds of human decency with which to face the future. Without resorting to sentimentality or raising vain hopes, both succeed in raising humanity's once proud flag a little higher than it was.

What is even more striking is that their lines of thought run parallel and finally intersect in the concept of a saving "residue." Niebuhr's approach is by way of history and philosophy, refining and extending ideas developed in such earlier works as *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, which emphasized the Calvinist doctrine of original sin, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, and *The Irony of American History*, both of which dealt with the historical failure of a self-deluding idealism tainted with class interest and lust for power.

Niebuhr's view in this book is that our present pessimism about man—not wholly warranted by history, by Christian philosophy properly understood, or the social sciences—is an overreaction to the excessively idealistic interpretation. Our minds have been thus trapped within a dualism going back to the Greeks. (Here, incidentally, Niebuhr shows the influence of Whitehead and Dewey, who pleaded for a philosophical reconstruction to bridge a chasm that modern

science and technology has greatly widened.)

Man's profound egotism and tribal parochialism, says Niebuhr, cannot obscure "the residual capacity for justice and devotion to the larger good." The principle of the family has been extended to the nation. Supranational cultures and systems of value obviously exist. The very hypocrisy of individuals and nations may be an index to this residual creative capacity. The present civil rights movement, involving the interest of the whole nation, is a struggle against narrow tribalism.

Finally, self-righteous Protestants may have been greatly in error in trying to suppress the kind of self-regard which leads to self-giving. Borrowing a leaf from the social psychology of Erich Fromm and Erik Erikson, Niebuhr argues that the ability to relate to others depends upon a healthy self-regard, and cannot be achieved by a robust moral will. "It is a gift of the original security of the self; that is, it is a matter of 'grace.'" In short, Niebuhr indicts our whole tradition of Protestant bourgeois individualism for ignoring the reality of social experience, and in this book we find Niebuhr himself reaching out ecumenically towards a world community of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, and just plain humanists.

#### *Masses and Elites*

All this will not satisfy the *enfant terrible* of the New Left, Michael Harrington, whose book *The Accidental Century* is one of the most spirited, rousing works of the last decade, and one which has assimilated and profited from much of the important thinking of our century. Niebuhr, I would say, is profound, but not more profound than this seemingly callow young man, and in some ways is more limited. Harrington deserves the respect of all thoughtful people, however much they disagree with his social-

philosophy.

This book, too, as Harrington states in the opening chapter, is "a hopeful book about decadence." His previous book, *The Other America*, about the unseen poor, became the bible of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society." This one probes more thoughtfully into the cultural and intellectual crisis brought about, in his opinion, by the "accidental revolution" of unplanned social and technological change. No one else has traced so well through so many vistas of human experience the profound and unforeseen consequences of unprecedented social and technological change.

If I had to single out Harrington's intellectual mentor, it would be Englishman Raymond Williams, who is as sensitively attuned to the human condition in the modern world as anybody I know. Harrington's well-directed attack upon conservatives' misuse of the label "mass" and "masses" comes essentially from Williams' *Culture and Society*, which envisions a new organic community under democratic socialism. Both seek to develop a common culture which is neither narrowly bourgeois nor proletarian; both emphasize the interrelation and continuity of human activities rather than a separation into spheres of interest.

The result of such separation, as Harrington brilliantly shows, is Marxist and capitalistic collectivization without "the active, directing participation of the great mass of people"; the emergence in the midst of prosperity of a permanent class of the poor; the creation of a new kind of exile-artist and secular holy man (Dostoyevsky, Faulkner, Joyce, Proust, Picasso, Malraux) "who painted a new subject, himself, which was all that was left when the established values disintegrated"; and millions of passive consumers debased by the culture of the mass media.

Has there really been a "revolt of the

masses"? Harrington asks. Not at all. Such a revolt has never taken place. "The real villain of mass society is the non-mass man" who produces mass culture in the interest of profit. The people at fault are really the sophisticated and educated elite, which sniffs contemptuously at the masses, whom it confuses with everything modern. Any theory, says Harrington, which describes the millions as "masses" is conservative. Even under communism, there exists in the millions an "internal dynamic and potential" making for a more humane culture:

*Abundance and technology certainly threaten the aristocratic right to tragedy. They could level everyone down to a common denominator, sating material needs and creating a spiritual hunger. But they could also raise everyone up to the level of the tragic. It is quite possible that a decent society in which men die from death rather than plague and famine will have a stark sense of the tragic.*

To achieve such a society, Harrington continues, we need new priorities. We might begin by paying people to go to school, as under the G.I. Bill for veterans after World War Two. It is vitally necessary to make an all-out assault on slums and to provide more public housing. We should begin to prepare now for the Age of Automation by creating new, exciting definitions of work. The alternative may be catastrophe, a new and colossal decadence of "bread and circuses."

#### *A Fulcrum for Change*

Harrington's greatest problem of conception, as that of Ellul, Moravia, and others, is to find a fulcrum for constructive social change. Recently, the New Left has seized

upon the civil rights movement, the agitation leading to the antipoverty programme, and the protest to the Vietnam war. Harrington proposes that the democratic Left form alliances for a New Politics. At the moment, all one can say by way of criticism is that Harrington's faith in the human potential is no more naive than Reinhold Niebuhr's or Alberto Moravia's faith in a "saving residue," that this critique of our industrial society agrees in most respects with that of the conservative Russell Kirk, and that his programme for reform shows a mature awareness of the pitfalls to avoid.

One question lurks behind all of the books discussed so far: Is technology the response to human needs, or does it create them? My answer would be, a little of both, but that primacy must be given to the basic nature of man, which, it seems, can be bent only so far without creating the stuff of discontent and rebellion.

All the weathervanes of contemporary culture, according to Marshall McLuhan, point to restlessness and healthy rebellion against conventional boundaries in behalf of warm human relations in an intimate world village. This is to say, too, that the supposedly inert public is lending its eyes, ears, and nerves less and less to commercial interests. In Harrington's words, something enormous is dying, and something enormous is being born. The pervasiveness of despair and the growing cult of irrationality bear within them seeds of hope.

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## BOOK NOTES

The "USA in Books" is a collection of 250 works intended as an introduction to the study of American civilization. It is especially strong in literature, history, biography, and the social sciences—approximately three-fourths of the titles being in these fields—and includes also significant works in the arts and some in education, science for the general reader, law, and philosophy.

To select a small library like this from all that is available is very difficult, especially when the purpose is "to show the spirit and reality of the American people—their social

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## THE BOWSPRIT

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*, was murdered a year ago, on April 4, 1968, but his ideas live on, even though they are rejected today by a militant wing of the American Negro community. Our first article, "The Meaning of Non-Violence," is his statement of his philosophy, in essence a Gandhian and a Christian view. *Roy Wilkins*, another civil rights leader, reflects the moderate Negro's view of the situation today, while *Nathan Glazer*, a white liberal, emphasizes in "Racial Attitudes and Urban Tensions" not only the problems of race in America but the gains which peaceful hard effort have achieved.

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Probably the gravest internal problems in America today are the plight of the less-educated, impoverished twenty per cent of the Negro community and the conditions for all people, especially the poor, who are resident in the large cities.

Although *Eric Hoffer* reminds us refreshingly in "Nature and the City" that cities are not all-evil, efforts to change unsatisfactory conditions are engaging some of the ablest architects, city-planners, sociologists, and critics. Among them *Lewis Mumford* in "The Human Scale" argues for urban design which respects the past, welcomes "variety and complexity in all their forms, environmental, social, and personal" and which deliberately leaves open opportunity for future change. Mr. Mumford argues against "the notion that the form and content of the city must primarily serve its technology and...expanding economy." *Athelstan Spilhaus*, on the contrary, argues vigorously in "The Experimental City" for techno-

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logically up-to-date, wholly new cities unhampered by old codes and conventions. Another activist in city planning is Charles Abrams whose imaginatively practical work for the United Nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is described by *Bernard Taper* in "Shelter in an Urbanizing World."

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While cities create problems, they also are and have been homes for the creative inquirer. In "The Idea of an Art Museum" *Sherman E. Lee* presents his view of what an art museum should be (and what it should not be). *Robert Middleton* describes in "The Meaning of the New Music" the character of the "new music," so puzzling to many contemporaries, and its evolution. *Keith Fort* considers some current literary assumptions—the collapse of value, the spiritual sterility, the decline of the hero, the inability to communicate—and, in "Modern Literature and a Set of Assumptions," questions their validity.

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In honour of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Walt Whitman, *Anne and Jacob Sloan* offer "In the Wake of Walt Whitman," a programme of poetry readings cum comment depicting the influence of this city-lover and man of faith.

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The last article, "Two Men in Search of the Quark," written by *Lee Edson* for the intelligent non-scientist, shows the creative mind at work in still another field, in theoretical physics.

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The reviews in Book World tell of four Americans who influenced markedly the American intellectuals of the first half of the twentieth century and whose ideas continue to be discussed: "William James: A Biography" by *Gay Wilson Allen* and "The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Parrington" by *Richard Hofstadter*.

M. C.

# THE MEANING OF NON-VIOLENCE

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 when he was thirty-five years old. Four years later he was awarded posthumously the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding, which Mrs. King received from President Zakir Husain in a moving ceremony at New Delhi in January 1969. A Baptist minister, he brought new leadership to the civil rights movement in America through his principles, eloquence, and tireless work. His assassination in April 1968 shocked America and the world. Brief though his life was, many people recognized in it a likeness to and the influence of Gandhiji.*

*The following passages, excerpted from his book "Stride Toward Freedom," published by Harper & Row Publishers, Inc. in 1958, suggest why.*

OPPRESSED PEOPLE deal with their oppression in three characteristic ways. One way is acquiescence: the oppressed resign themselves to their doom. They tacitly adjust themselves to oppression, and thereby become conditioned to it. In every movement toward freedom some of the oppressed prefer to remain oppressed...

## *Acquiescence*

To accept passively an unjust system is to cooperate with that system; thereby the oppressed become as evil as the oppressor. Non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is coopera-

tion with good. The oppressed must never allow the conscience of the oppressor to slumber. Religion reminds every man that he is his brother's keeper.

To accept injustice or segregation passively is to say to the oppressor that his actions are morally right. It is a way of allowing his conscience to fall asleep. At this moment the oppressed fails to be his brother's keeper. So acquiescence—while often the easier way—is not the moral way. It is the way of the coward...

## *Violence*

A second way that oppressed people sometimes deal with oppression is to resort to physical violence and corrod-

## THE MEANING OF NON-VIOLENCE

ing hatred. Violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of temporary victories, violence never brings permanent peace. It solves no social problem; it merely creates new and more complicated ones.

Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers...

### *Non-violent Resistance*

The third way open to oppressed people in their quest for freedom is the way of non-violent resistance. Like the synthesis in Hegelian philosophy, the principle of non-violent resistance seeks to reconcile the truths of two opposites—acquiescence and violence—while avoiding the extremes and immoralities of both.

The non-violent resister agrees with the person who acquiesces that one should not be physically aggressive toward his opponent; but he balances the equation by agreeing with the person of

violence that evil must be resisted. He avoids the non-resistance of the former and the violent resistance of the latter. With non-violent resistance, no individual or group need submit to any wrong, nor need anyone resort to violence in order to right a wrong.

It seems to me that this is the method that must guide the actions of the Negro in the present crisis in race relations. Through non-violent resistance the Negro will be able to rise to the noble height of opposing the unjust system while loving the perpetrators of the system. The Negro must work passionately and unrelentingly for full stature as a citizen, but he must not use inferior methods to gain it. He must never come to terms with falsehood, malice, hate, or destruction...

By non-violent resistance, the Negro can also enlist all men of good will in his struggle for equality. The problem is not a purely racial one, with Negroes set against whites. In the end, it is not a struggle between people at all, but a tension between justice and injustice. Non-violent resistance is not aimed against oppressors but against oppression. Under its banner, consciences, not racial groups, are enlisted...

The way of non-violence means a willingness to suffer and sacrifice. It may mean going to jail...it may even mean physical death. But if physical death is the price that a man must pay to free his children and his white brethren from a permanent death of the spirit, then nothing could be more redemptive.

# 'CORRECT THE SYSTEM, DON'T DESTROY IT'

## An Interview with Roy Wilkins

LESLIE G. RANGE

*Below is an interview conducted by Mr. Range with Roy Wilkins for "The Christian Science Monitor" of September 10, 1968.*

*Mr. Wilkins is Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and has been active in it since 1931. The first national organization of Negroes, the N.A.A.C.P. is now spoken of as a middle-of-the-road, middle class organization.*

MR. WILKINS, exactly what is happening in the United states today? Is it still a civil-rights movement or has it become a black revolution?

It seems to me we're in a transition phase.

I doubt that we're in the midst of a revolution. This word is very loosely used by people who don't know what a revolution is or what it takes to mount one.

We are in an urban crisis. The people of the United States, like those of the world, are moving toward urban concentrations.

Even if all the population were the same colour you'd still have questions of recreation, housing, and transportation.

But it's useless to say that the urban crisis can be solved without solving the matter of racial adjustments or racial justice. Likewise it's foolish to assume that the purely racial crisis can be solved apart from the solution of the crisis of the cities.

*In what areas should black Americans receive compensatory treatment for past injustices?*

I'm not a lawyer so I can't say whether the black minority in this country ought to be able to collect in land or goods or cash for something that

**'CORRECT THE SYSTEM, DON'T DESTROY IT'**

happened to them 250 years ago.

*Couldn't there be compensatory treatment in terms of industrial hiring practices?*

Yes, if you mean enlarging quotas or job opportunities. I think we run into trouble, however, if we talk about lowering the quality of the employee. All it results in is lowering the quality of the end product.

If a man is employed to turn out a certain piece of machinery and he doesn't know how to do it, the piece of machinery will be inferior and will not be profitable. To say "Well, I gave him a chance because he's black"—that doesn't help him or the company or the product.

Industry has to say more than "we'll train him, we will not turn him down or disqualify him" because he's black. It must also say, "We'll give him extra training and time." In the end he has to turn out the same quality of machinery as any other workman.

*Have you discovered any fresh, new ways to deal with racism?*

No, I haven't. But I have no doubts that new ways are being uncovered every day:

For instance, the whole concept of fair employment and fair housing was unheard of 25 years ago.

The idea of a Fair Employment Practice Commission was stimulated by A. Philip Randolph in 1940 and 1941. It grew out of the fact that black Americans were deprived of employment in factories that were turning out goods for

England in the war against Germany. It seems so ridiculous that when the British were begging for material....and all the things they needed so desperately and when factories were begging for workers that black workers were told: "No, we have no jobs for you."

Out of this desperation the fair-employment idea was born—a fresh way of attacking racism at that time.

Withholding federal funds from state and local units is a new technique developed during the last 10 years.

And the civil-rights movement, like the labour movement up to this time, has evolved new bargaining techniques. Martin Luther King evolved a way of involving masses of people in a simplified, sloganized issue in order to bring their mass pressure to bear. Thus the demonstration was born. This was a new technique, a new idea.

I have no doubt that the late 1960's and the 1970's will also bring forth new ideas.

*Mr. Wilkins, we've had riots, assassinations, and commission reports all pointing to problems in America. What will it take to bring about the necessary national commitment to solve them?*

I think a combination of the reports you mentioned, the assassinations, and the riots attract attention. A man who won't go to a lecture or who won't read a report sees on his television and reads in his newspapers about riots, and this stirs him up.

I definitely think we're on our way to a national commitment. Our legislation has pointed in that direction. Our court

decisions are pointed in that direction. Our colleges with their new awareness of the educational needs and rights of a minority are on their way.

Don't forget, we have 200 million people in America. It's pretty hard to get a commitment. It takes time and different methods.

*What has been the role of militancy up to now in the civil-rights struggle and what form should it take in the future?*

The word militancy means so many different things to so many different people.

I happen to believe that the NAACP was the most militant organization in the civil rights field when it started because it insisted on going to the root cause of the problem, namely racial discrimination and the policy that kept the black minority out of the mainstream of American life. The campaign carried on by the NAACP to bring the Negro under the Constitution and to get legislation that would protect him was militancy.

How does this apply to the current situation? Generally "militants" include people who feel something is lacking in the present programmes for change. They want to go beyond the borders now encompassing the civil-rights movement. They want to try new things and ask new questions.

I think this has a place in the new assault. Nobody in my generation ought to assert that he has thought of everything and every method. A people that does not rise up with new ideas and does not submit to change is a dead people.

I don't think my people are dead. I think they are very much alive.

I think we'll have young people come along—we have many of them now—who will advance some crazy ideas and some fantastic ideas, but they will advance some new ideas, good ones, and those are the ones we need.

*What is your current definition of Black Power?*

Black Power has been defined about six dozen times. But judging by what its sponsors and its more sober defenders have talked about it is nothing new. The building of economic competence within the group is not new. The building of race pride and a better image is not new. Most people who have given any thought to this in the black minority have already embarked on these programmes.

Now what we need are new ways of building economic power, new ways of exercising political influence, and new ways of declaring and asserting our image. The most solid way of projecting our image, of course, is by demonstrating worth and competence and by evolving a moral code.

Those who go around very loosely saying we want nothing to do with middle-class American life or middle-class values. What do they mean by this?

Do they mean they want to do away with truth, honour, respect, integrity, competence? How do they think they will live? What kind of world do they think they will organize if these things go down the drain?

'CORRECT THE SYSTEM, DON'T DESTROY IT'

Do they mean they would have no order at all? Or are they simply rebelling against a system they regard as oppressive to the black minority?

If a system of law and order has been perverted, the thing to do is to correct it—not destroy it.

*Mr. Wilkins, should black people form their own political parties?*

I would think for the time being—at least until it's been thoroughly demonstrated not to be productive—that political activity would be within the existing parties. I certainly would not form a racist party, a black party. This would be suicidal. We're still a minority, and this fact dictates the type of strategy you use in order to get along in a majority's world.

*Are civil-rights organizations in touch with the people they're supposed to be representing?*

We in the NAACP regard ourselves as being responsible in our membership. We're the only civil-rights organization that has any considerable membership. Last year we had some 430,000 persons who signed up on the dotted line and paid dues.

Other organizations don't have memberships. CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), for example, has affiliated groups. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Dr. Martin Luther King's organization, also has affiliated groups. The Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee has between 100 and 200 disciples or staff

members who profess to interpret the views of some people. CORE also professes to interpret views.

We in the NAACP proceed from year to year under a programme devised by our delegates at the annual conventions.

We also feel that we speak for the Negro community as a whole—we've been in this business almost 60 years. In that time we have come to know the people we do not represent. But even those that disagree with us do agree with our objectives. They simply say we aren't going about them in the right way.

*Is there a special role for educated black people in the civil-rights movement today?*

There always has been.

We've made an error in letting this class angle be exploited so much. I'm the first one to admit that a lot of educated Negroes who "made it" went off by themselves and tried to lose themselves and tried to get rid of their race. But they've come back.

I don't think it's fair to say that they all ran away and forgot. Many of them sought to help their brothers by teaching. Many went into business and tried to help that way. And in the early days, as far as the NAACP was concerned, the financial support came from the middle-class Negro.

The NAACP started in 1909. By 1919 the organization was being supported by its black members.

It's regrettable that some of our white friends have injected the class

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angle into it. They say that civil rights has benefited the upper-class Negroes but it hasn't benefited the lower-class Negro. Or they say that the spectacular appointment of one man by the President benefits that one man but it doesn't benefit the rank and file. The fact that a man is picked for a job may be personal recognition of that man, but it's also a recognition of his whole race.

*Mr. Wilkins, have there been any signs recently that indicate progress for black Americans?*

There has been progress in employment and the types of job open that have been created. There has been progress in housing—although that, in my estimation, is the toughest area in the whole civil-rights picture. And despite all of the setbacks and all of the present arguments there has been progress in education.

If we have done nothing but discover and lay bare the failure of the public education system to look into the special background of the Negro

minority and to devise ways of motivating his children, teaching his history and creating an image—that means progress.

I agree with all the critics who say, "It ain't nothing yet," compared to the 25 million people and their needs.

But progress has been made just in shaking up the apathy of the white community. The report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders, which asserted that white racism was responsible for what happened in black America, did a lot to shake up the country. This report has sold more copies than any other report that's ever been issued on this subject.

Church groups, lodge halls, unions, and human-relations commissions are studying this whole business, and this is a mark of progress.

The solution of the urban crisis and the racial crisis, as Senator (Eugene J.) McCarthy has said, is the No. 1 domestic problem—probably more important than the Vietnam war. Just bringing that realization to America means that we've come some way.

# RACIAL ATTITUDES AND URBAN TENSIONS

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NATHAN GLAZER

*The following article analyzes and takes issue with the report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, a commission appointed by President Johnson to study the causes and to suggest means to avoid repetition of the racial riots which occurred in several American cities in 1967. The writer, a Professor of Sociology at Harvard University, has served as a policy adviser of the federal housing agency and is co-author of "Beyond the Melting Pot" (with D.P. Moynihan) and of "The Lonely Ground" (with D. Riesman and R. Denney).*

THE MERE LOGISTICS of the Report of the U.S. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders are awe-inspiring. It was completed in February 1968, only seven months after President Johnson appointed the Commission to analyze the causes of the racial riots that broke out in Newark, Detroit, and other cities during the summer of 1967, and to recommend solutions.

A sizable staff conducted intensive investigations in more than a dozen cities, sifting mounds of evidence and interviewing hundreds of people, from mayors and police chiefs to Negro residents and black militants. The final report runs to more than 600 closely-printed pages in a paperback edition which appeared a few days after the Commission released its findings, and which quickly became a bestseller.

## *Conclusions of the Commission on Civil Disorders*

But more striking even than the energy and efficiency that went into producing the report were its sweeping and uncompromising conclusions, as expressed in the following extreme (and most widely quoted) passages:

"This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal." And further: "Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans.... White society is deeply implicated in the ghetto, white institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it."

But white guilt can be redeemed: "This deepening racial division is not inevitable. The movement apart can be reversed. Choice is still possible. Our principal task is to define that choice and to press for a national resolution."

One reason the report could be written so fast is that it had a stance, a philosophy, an outlook to guide it. That stance, the dominant U.S. liberal position on the problems of the ghetto, has three key elements. First, the problems of the ghetto are susceptible of rapid solution. Second, the solutions are at hand as long as we have the will. Third, all solutions involve greater government action and expenditures. The report ends with a vast array of proposals, most of which have already been implemented or are being implemented to one degree or another.

The 11-member Commission asserts that what is primarily involved is an effort of will by people and by all levels of government—since the resources and programmes are available. If white America takes to heart its involvement in the creation and the maintenance of the ghetto, it can overcome the ghetto's social and psychological problems, and the Negro can become as much an integral part of America as the other minority groups—such as the Irish, Jewish, Italian—that have already been absorbed into a single national society.

#### *Guilt and Action*

What was most startling in the report was that a Commission which included leading representatives of the chief branches of American society, of the American "establishment," appealed not only to the

self-interest of the white majority to carry out the necessary programmes, but to their sense of guilt and responsibility.

It was particularly impressive to find such men as Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois (chairman), Mayor John Lindsay of New York City (vice-chairman), a senator from Oklahoma, the police chief of Atlanta, Georgia, two congressmen, a state official, an industrialist and a labour leader—all agreeing with the two Negro members, civil rights leader Roy Wilkins and Senator Edward Brooke of Massachusetts, on this appeal to guilt as the most effective way of galvanizing white Americans into action.

The report was obviously addressed to black Americans as well. While documenting the violence and destructiveness of the ghetto riots, it traces the disorders not to any organized activity but to spontaneous outbursts based on pent-up frustration and anger, created by unemployment (especially among young unmarried Negro men), discrimination, clashes with police, poor education and housing, ill-kept neighbourhoods, the sense of powerlessness, the unresponsiveness of local institutions and power-holders.

This analysis, along with the emphasis on white racism, provided Negroes with an additional psychological weapon in demanding far-reaching programmes which could transform their urban environment.

Most of the programmes which the report urges are included in the federal budget for 1968-69, but at levels far below what the Kerner Commission (as it came to be called, after its chairman) considers necessary. This budget, nevertheless, has larger outlays than in the past for man-

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power development, welfare, education and urban housing.

The mayors, of course, are the leading political supporters of the Commission's report—Mayor Lindsay of New York was the Commission's best-known and perhaps most influential member—for they desperately need federal money for local programmes.

### *Responding at the Neighbourhood Level*

One major emphasis in the report is on proposals that only local governments can properly carry out. These proposals involve, for the most part, the rapid expansion of all the mechanisms and agencies whereby grievances can be voiced at the local and neighbourhood level so that the direct response of government agencies to ghetto needs can be made faster, more understanding, and more satisfying.

The report proposes, for a first phase, the establishment of Neighbourhood Action Task Forces, each of which includes "a key official in the Mayor's office with direct and immediate access to the mayor, ranking city officials from the operating agencies serving the ghetto community, elected leaders, representatives from the local business, labour, professional and church communities, and neighbourhood leaders, including representatives of community organizations of all orientations, and youth leaders."

The Task Forces are to meet regularly with ghetto residents. "Ghetto residents should be able to rely on the capacity of the Task Force to cut through the maze of red tape and to overcome bureaucratic barriers in order to make things—collec-

tion of garbage, removal of abandoned cars, installation of lights in the park, establishment of play-streets—happen.

"To accomplish this purpose, the participating city officials should be those with operational decision-making authority. Lesser staff or public relations personnel will not be able to provide the confrontation and interaction with the community representatives which is essential to the effective functioning of the Task Force."

The report goes on to propose an *Ombudsman*-type agency for hearing citizens' grievances and responding to them; better legal services for the poor; expanded employment by city government of ghetto residents; and state and federal assistance to help cities undertake these steps.

As second phase actions, it proposes the establishment of Neighbourhood City Halls, so that a resident need not travel downtown to seek out a city official; and the development of multi-service centres for legal, health and psychological assistance.

Finally, to achieve "more effective community representation," the report calls for expanding the principles of community self-control which in a moderate and more restricted way was practised by community action agencies of the poverty programme.

### *Police and the Ghetto*

The report also advances extensive proposals affecting the police (going into great detail on matters of recruitment, training, deployment, appeals and grievance procedures, etc.), the courts, and the

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local educational systems, which are generally under separate elected boards over whom local government has no power.

These proposals are developed with great sensitivity to the realities of ghetto life. Thus, facing the fact that Negroes generally regard the police as enemies, the report offers various measures which might restore some degree of understanding between policemen and Negroes such as intensive recruitment of Negro policemen (their proportion has risen rapidly in the past decade in major cities) and the employment of ghetto youth as junior police aides.

The report recognizes that courts are often insensitive to the realities of life among the poor, as when they impose heavy bail that cannot be met. During the riots, large numbers of Negroes were arrested, some of whom may have had nothing to do with the arson and looting. Owing to the inadequacy of court and police procedures, some were kept in jail for days, sometimes losing their jobs as a result, or losing contact with their families. The report makes many excellent suggestions for dealing with such problems so as to prevent the disruption of human lives and to keep the lowly from being pushed further down.

### *Reaction to the Report*

Although in New York City and elsewhere, some of the report's suggestions are being implemented, generally there has been little immediate response to the Commission's proposals. This is not, I think, because the American people lack awareness of the gravity of the problem.

The mass media, and television most vividly, have reported the riots, the conditions of life in the Negro ghettos, and—often sympathetically—the political developments that have brought ever more militant black leaders to prominence. Why then has the reaction to the Commission's report been so sluggish?

One obvious explanation is that the involvement of the nation in the war in Vietnam, and the enormous costs of that war, use up much of the resources both of money and of talent which could be devoted to solving the ghetto crisis.

Another explanation—favoured by black militant leaders—is that the American people remain racist and are therefore not concerned to take the actions necessary to raise the Negro's status and living standards.

A third explanation—which I believe has much force—is that most Americans on all levels do not accept the extreme indictment of the report.

Without denying the historical reality of racist feeling, I think the Commission exaggerates its significance and scope for understanding the present racial crisis. It does not mention the many careful surveys made of racial attitudes in recent years, all of which show a steady drop in racial prejudice even as the racial crisis has heightened. Indeed, on the whole, politicians who have made the strongest appeals to prejudice have not done well—but this may be changing.

I think we have never had a more positive set of racial attitudes, on the white side, than we have today. We have passed one civil rights act after another, and enforced them. Serious programmes have been launched to recruit and ad-

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vance Negroes into many key strata of American life—the civil services, business, the armed forces, the universities, the medical schools, the police.

A many-sided effort is underway to raise the levels of Negro achievement in employment—by training and on-the-job programmes, by breaking down union restrictions, etc. We find similar programmes in higher education—to recruit Negro students even when they do not fulfil formal requirements, to assist them with money and guidance, to recruit Negro faculty, and to develop helpful relations with Negro communities.

Even where certain efforts to achieve integration or to improve in some way the position of the Negro have failed, racism is rarely the whole explanation, or even the most important explanation. In elementary education, for example, the pace in reducing *de facto* segregation in Northern cities has been slow and uneven. But the reason is less a matter of racism than it is fear of having one's child bussed out of his neighbourhood or having him educated with more poorly prepared and less disciplined children.

Even the resistance to residential segregation in the North and West is not only a racial matter; it is also a matter of fear that property values and the character of a neighbourhood would decline—fears which are often mistaken but nonetheless sincerely felt.

### *The Middle Class Negro*

Undoubtedly racism plays a role in the refusal of American society and its leaders to rise up in one vast *mea culpa* and set itself to work to implement the

proposals of the Kerner Commission's report. But I see some other things at work here, and we can get to them by considering one major topic that is not in the report: the middle-class Negro, or the secure working-class Negro. This is the missing man in the present crisis. And yet he must be a key factor both in the analysis of the problem—of what has gone wrong—and in the solution to the problem—of what can be done about it.

The Negro without a problem (at least the kind of problem that leads to riots and Commissions) is attacked as a sell-out and an Uncle Tom by Negro militants, and unfortunately their white liberal supporters often go along. Tom Wicker, the distinguished columnist of *The New York Times*, in his introduction to the Bantam paperback edition of the Commission report, refers to young Negro rioters, "hostile to the white society surrounding and repressing them, and equally hostile to the middle-class Negroes who accommodated themselves to white dominance."

A strange passage—have Negroes become middle class by accommodating themselves to "white dominance"? This is certainly the Negro militant view of the matter. Or have they become middle class through accommodating themselves to the demands and disciplines and requirements of an industrial and, on the whole, democratic society?

The middle-class Negro, the missing man in the report, is important for a number of reasons. First, there are many of them—civil service workers, professionals, teachers, even businessmen, and skilled workers earning high wages. Even at a modest estimate, more than 40 per

cent of Negro Americans have escaped poverty, and have achieved something they feel is worthwhile—homes, good jobs, stable families. This middle class Negro suffers too. But one of the things he suffers from most today is that he is not suggested as a model for other Negroes—he is rather attacked as a sell-out.

Thus the role he might play in overcoming the crisis of the ghetto is denigrated. Instead, all solutions are seen by black militants as requiring the action of the “white power structure” or a dangerous skirting of the bounds of illegality, rather than in terms of the kind of progress that possibly half of Negro Americans have already made—despite circumstances of prejudice and discrimination they should not have had to face. To ignore the middle-class Negro means, then, to ignore a major resource for progress.

Secondly, the middle-class Negro is important for white Americans of good will. He is proof that the task is not a complete failure, that something has been achieved—even if more by the efforts of individual Negroes than through the benignity of white society. I think an appeal by the Commission to what has already been achieved might have helped to mobilize white sentiment for greater efforts. It would surely have helped to strengthen the self-confidence of a Negro middle class that already feels itself pressured, by the severe and unfair attack from Negro militants, to deny its achievements and its virtues, and to succumb to self-denigration.

#### *Some Achievements*

The report indicates some of the facts

of limited success and achievement—but usually by indirection and in a negative context. Thus the report states: “Between 2 and 2.5 million Negroes—16 to 20 per cent of the total Negro population of all central cities—live in squalor and deprivation in ghetto neighbourhoods.” Which means that 80 to 84 per cent of 15 million Negroes, many of whom have migrated only in recent decades to central cities, do *not* live in squalor and degradation, according to the Commission’s calculations.

The notion that the Negro is making no economic progress—which the tone of the Commission’s report reinforces—cannot be sustained. The Commission reports: “The Negro ‘upper-income’ group is rapidly expanding and achieving sizeable income gains. In 1966, 28 per cent of all Negro families received income of \$7,000 (Rs. 52,500) or more, compared with 55 per cent of white families. This was double the proportion of Negroes receiving comparable incomes in 1960, and four times greater than the proportion receiving such incomes in 1947. Moreover, the proportion of Negroes employed in high-skill, high status and well-paying jobs rose faster than comparable proportions among whites from 1960 to 1966.”

According to an authoritative compendium of statistics issued by the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Labour Statistics last year, there were significant changes in education and in housing among non-whites in the six years between 1960 and 1966. Thus, educational achievement for nonwhite males rose from 10.5 to 12.1 years in that period, and the gap between nonwhite and white

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educational achievement was reduced to about half a year (this says nothing, of course, as to the quality of education achieved).

The figures on housing are more striking. Substandard housing units occupied by nonwhites dropped 25 per cent, from 2,263,000 units to 1,691,000 units. Standard or above-standard housing occupied by nonwhites rose from 2,881,000 to 4,135,000 units, or by 44 per cent in the same period (1960-1966).

These positive changes have to be set against the still very high Negro unemployment rates (particularly among the youth), the slow progress in closing the gap between Negro and white income or in reducing the comparatively high Negro infant mortality rates, and other areas where we have progressed all too slowly. Yet a balanced picture—and one that might serve as a better basis for policy—would certainly also include areas of remarkably rapid change.

### *The Political Aspect*

Obviously, we cannot deal with deep political feeling by arguing that there has been material progress. Although material issues still play an important role in U.S. race relations, political issues—power, representation, respect—play as large a role.

But even here we can see substantial changes. The Kerner Commission surveyed Negro representation in government in 20 cities. These cities averaged 16 per cent in Negro population, 10 per cent in Negro representation. Not bad, an objective observer might conclude, for a group that has only recently become numerous in most of these cities and is

still in the process of developing a sizable middle and professional class.

Even the proportion of Negroes in local police forces—and grievances over police attitudes are at the top of any list of ghetto grievances, while police incidents have sparked almost every riot—is rising, and one might conclude that the police were showing some responsiveness to the urgent problem of increasing Negro representation. For example: Washington has 21 per cent Negroes in its police force, Philadelphia 20 per cent, Chicago 17 per cent, St. Louis 11, Hartford 11, Newark 10, Atlanta 10, Cleveland 7, New York 5, Detroit 5.

In every case, the proportion of Negro to white policemen is considerably below the proportion of Negroes to whites in the local population. But in view of the traditional domination of police forces by the Irish, and the relatively recent migration of large Negro populations to the cities, I think one could as easily conclude from these figures that American democracy is succeeding as that it is failing.

Yet this progress has been accompanied by increasing despair, violence, and anger among the Negro population of the country. As racism declines, its every manifestation is more infuriating. As progress comes, the reality of large areas of life as yet untouched by progress becomes ever more galling. This is the revolution of rising expectations with a vengeance.

We know we must keep up with it if we can, or outrace it. And this is why the Kerner Commission proposed larger programmes in manpower development, education, welfare, housing. Now, by the Commission's own figures, expenditures

in these fields have increased many times in just the last few years.

"Federal expenditure for manpower development and training have increased from less than \$60 million in 1963 to 1.6 billion in 1968. The President has proposed a further increase to \$2.1 billion in 1969...to provide work experience, training, and supportive services for 1.3 million men and women....Federal expenditures for education, training and related services have increased from 4.7 billion in fiscal 1964 to 12.3 billion in fiscal 1969....Direct Federal expenditures for housing and community development have increased from \$600 million in fiscal 1964 to nearly \$3 billion in fiscal 1969."

Health expenditures in the same period have also increased greatly, and welfare expenditures have also gone up, if not as dramatically. Nonetheless, all these increases are reported in a context which cries out, not enough, not enough, more, more.

But in each of these fields the increase in expenditure does not mean an automatic transfer of money from the government to the poor and needy ghetto population. The programmes the Commission is calling for require skilled administrators, skilled personnel of all types—teachers, social workers, counsellors.

They require, even more, a great supply of political skill and talent at the local level, for all these programmes involve grants that presuppose local initiative and capacity. Simply to demand more, when we know how badly so many of the new programmes so hastily mounted in the last few years are doing, makes little sense.

In addition to demanding programmes whose results cannot immediately appease expectations, the Commission adds an insistence on extending local participation, and the provision of legal, monetary, and political resources to local community groups to help them press their demands on government more effectively. Thus on the one hand we have an implied promise that cannot be fulfilled—that social programmes will bring instant equality—and, on the other, measures to increase frustration and anger when it is not.

#### *The Question of Identity*

Let me be clear: there is no question that programmes for manpower training, for education, for jobs, for social services of various types must be expanded. But I do not think that we can count on these programmes to play much of a role in preventing riots or to bring happiness and peace to the Negro low-income groups. For their frustration and anger now has important political and ideological dimensions and will be played out, I feel, primarily in the political and ideological arenas. Concretely, Negro Americans must determine for themselves their identity and their role in the nation.

At its highest levels and even many of its middle levels, white America already regards the Negro as a full and equal American. But for many Negroes the agony of their race's 300-year experience in America now raises the serious question of just what their relationship to this country should be. They are live actors in the drama—not simply a mass played on by white actions and white attitudes.

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What white Americans do matters, but they should not deceive themselves into thinking that their actions alone will solve the problem.

The political realm is an independent one, and it is up to Negro leaders as well as white leaders to determine just what kind of nation they make out of America —quite independently of the level of welfare payments, or the rate of unemployment, or the quality of housing. Images and ideology are now playing a key role—and how 20 million Negro Americans finally define their relationship to this country depends on them and their leaders, too, as well as white America and its leaders.

From this perspective, I believe the Commission errs in making no appeal to Negro leaders, in showing no role for them, in confirming them in a posture that demands and threatens, rather than one which also defines issues and cooperates

in their solution.

I would say one of the principal reasons why the response to the Commission's proposals will be slow is that we do not really know how to match the explosive political change in the Negro community, a change which has eclipsed moderate forces, with equally explosive and rapid social change, no matter what we do.

Obviously, we must try. And in the great number of proposals of the Commission there are many that are valuable and important. It is also to the good that a Commission that reflects conservative as well as liberal opinion should emphasize with such force and national impact the gravity of the problem. But I think it would have been helpful if the Commission had recognized how much has been attempted and accomplished, and how difficult and complex the next phase of securing full equality for the Negro will be.

# NATURE AND THE CITY

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ERIC HOFFER

*The author, once a migratory worker and a longshoreman, presents below a non-Wordsorthian paean. Among Mr. Hoffer's books are "The True Believer," "The Passionate State of Mind," "The Ordeal of Change," and "The Temper of Our Time."*

FOR 18 YEARS, as a migratory farm worker and placer miner, I knew nature at close quarters. Nature was breathing down my neck, and I knew it did not like me.

If I stretched on the ground to rest, nature pushed its hard knuckles into my side, and sent bugs, burrs, and foxtails to make me get up and be gone. As a placer miner I had to run the gauntlet of buck-brush, manzanita, and poison oak when I left the road to find my way to a creek.

Direct contact with nature almost always meant scratches, bites, torn clothes and grime that ate its way into every pore of the body. On the paved road, even when miles from anywhere, I felt at home. I had a sense of kinship with the winding, endless road that cares not where it goes and what its load. And the road led to the city.

## *City is Man's Refuge*

I knew with every fibre of my being that the city is man's only home on this planet; that it is his refuge from a hostile

non-human cosmos. I did not have to be a scholar to recognize that man's greatest achievements were conceived and realized, not in the bracing atmosphere of the plains, deserts, forest and mountain tops, but in the smelly, noisy, overcrowded cities of Jerusalem, Athens, Florence, Shakespeare's London and Rembrandt's Amsterdam.

There is in this country, particularly among the educated, a romantic, worshipful attitude toward nature. Nature is thought to be pure, innocent, serene, health-giving, the fountainhead of elevated thoughts and feelings.

My hunch is that the attitude of the educated American toward nature is shaped and coloured by European literature. Europe is probably one of the tamest parts of the world. Imagine a subcontinent without a single desert or rampaging river, without tornadoes, sandstorms, hailstorms or inundations.

## *Nature is Terrible*

Compare it with our snarling continent. Open your newspapers any morning

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and you find reports of floods, tornadoes, blizzards, hurricanes, hailstorms, avalanches, eruptions, pests and plagues. Sometimes when reading about nature's terrible visitations and her massacre of the innocents you wonder whether this continent is fit for human beings.

Fly over this continent and you see what we have done. We have cast a net of concrete roads over a snarling continent, and proceeded to tame each square. Every once in a while there is a heaving and rumbling, and the savage continent shakes us off its back.

On the Berkeley campus generations of young people—brainwashed by Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson, and other poets of a manicured little island—have gone up to the woods to make love, and returned infected with poison oak. They have not yet realized that on this continent

woods and meadows are not what the poets say they are.

The miracle is that we have taken a continent unfit for human beings and made it a cornucopia of unprecedented plenty. The wilderness boys accuse us of ravaging and raping a virgin continent. Actually, our enormous mastery over nature is such that if we were so minded, we could, in fifty years or so, regrow all the forest, replenish the soil, cleanse all rivers and the air of pollution, have buffalo herds again thundering on the plains, and make the continent as virgin as when we first got here.

If this nation decays and declines it will be not because we have raped and ravaged a continent, but because we do not know how to build and run viable cities. America's destiny will be decided in the cities.

# THE HUMAN SCALE

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LEWIS MUMFORD

*One of America's outstanding senior citizens, Mr. Mumford describes himself simply as "author." Among his many books are "Sticks and Stones," "The Culture of Cities," "Technics and Civilization," and "The City in History." In 1968 a collection of his essays, "The Urban Prospect," was issued. It includes an article originally published in "The Architectural Record" which is excerpted below by permission of Harcourt Brace & World, Inc. and Martin Secker & Warburg, Ltd.*

NOBODY CAN BE SATISFIED with the form of the city today. Neither as a working mechanism, as a social medium, nor as a work of art does the city fulfil the high hopes that modern civilization has called forth—or even meet our reasonable demands.

Yet the mechanical processes of fabricating urban structures have never before been carried to a higher point: the energies even a small city now commands would have roused the envy of an Egyptian Pharaoh in the Pyramid Age.

And there are moments in approaching New York, Philadelphia, or San

Francisco by car when, if the light is right and the distant masses of the buildings are sufficiently far away, a new form of urban splendour, more dazzling than that of Venice or Florence, seems to have been achieved.

Too soon one realizes that the city as a whole, when one approaches it closer, does not have more than a residue of this promised form in an occasional patch of good building. For the rest, the play of light and shade, of haze and colour, has provided for the mobile eye a pleasure that will not bear closer architectural investigation.

The illusion fades in the presence of the car-choked streets, the blank glassy

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buildings, the glare of competitive architectural advertisements, the studied monotony of high-rise slabs in urban renewal projects: in short, new buildings and new quarters that lack any aesthetic identity and any human appeal except that of superficial sanitary decency and bare mechanical order.

In all the big cities of America, the process of urban rebuilding is now proceeding at a rapid rate, as a result of putting both the financial and legal powers of the state at the service of the private investor and builder. But both architecturally and socially the resulting forms have been so devoid of character and individuality that the most sordid quarters, if they have been enriched over the years by human intercourse and human choice, suddenly seem precious even in their ugliness, even in their disorder.

### *Need for Urban Design*

Whatever people made of their cities in the past, they expressed a visible unity that bound together, in ever more complex form, the cumulative life of the community; the face and form of the city still recorded that which was desirable, memorable, admirable.

Today a rigid mechanical order takes the place of social diversity, and endless assemblyline urban units automatically expand the physical structure of the city while destroying the contents and meaning of city life. The paradox of this period of rapid "urbanization" is that the city itself is being effaced. Minds still operating under an obsolete 19th century ideology of unremitting physical expansion

oddly hail this outcome as "progress."

The time has come to reconsider the whole process of urban design. We must ask ourselves what changes are necessary if the city is again to become architecturally expressive, and economically workable, without our having to sacrifice its proper life to the mechanical means for keeping that life going.

Admittedly, neither the architect nor the planner can produce, solely out of his professional skill, the conditions necessary for building and rebuilding adequate urban communities; but their own conscious reorientation on these matters is a necessary part of a wider transformation in which many other groups, professions and institutions must in the end participate.

The multiplication and expansion of cities which took place in the 19th century in all industrial countries occurred at a moment when the great city builders of the past—the kings and princes, the bishops and the guilds—were all stepping out of the picture; and the traditions that had guided them, instead of being modified and improved, were recklessly discarded by both municipal authorities and business enterprisers.

Genuine improvements took place, indeed, in the internal organization of cities during the 19th century: the first substantial improvements since the introduction of drains, piped drinking water, and water closets into the cities and palaces of Sumer, Crete, and Rome.

But the new organs of sanitation, hygiene and communication had little effect on the visible city, while the improvements of transportation by railroad, elevated railroad, and trolley car brought in

visual disorder and noise and, in the case of railroad cuts and marshalling yards, disrupted urban space as recklessly as expressways and parking lots do today.

In both the underground and the aboveground city, these new gains in mechanical efficiency were mainly formless, apart from occasional by-products like a handsome railroad station or a bridge.

In consequence, the great mass of metropolitan buildings since the 19th century has been disorganized and formless, even when it has professed to be mechanically efficient. Almost until today, dreams of improvement were either cast into archaic, medieval, classic, or Renaissance moulds, unchanged except in scale, or into purely industrial terms of mechanical innovations, collective 'Crystal Palaces,' such as H.G. Wells pictured in his scientific romances.

In America, despite the City Beautiful movement of the nineties, urban progress is still identified with high buildings, wide avenues, long vistas: the higher, the wider, the longer, the better.

#### *Mechanic vs. Organic*

Current suggestions for further urban improvement still tend to fall automatically into a purely mechanical mould: gouging new expressways into the city, multiplying skyscrapers, providing moving sidewalks, building garages and underground shelters, projecting linear roadtowns, or covering the entire area with a metal and plastic dome to make possible total control of urban weather—on the glib theory that uniform conditions are "ideal" ones.

So long as the main human functions and purposes of the city are ignored, these subsidiary processes tend to dominate the architect's imagination. All the more because the resulting fragments of urbanoid tissue can be produced anywhere, at a profit, in limitless quantities. We are now witnessing the climax of this process.

The great exception to the routine designs for 19th century urban expansion was the replanning of the centre of Paris. Paris became in fact *the* model 19th century city. Here, in a consistent organic development that began under Colbert and was carried to a temporary climax under Baron Haussmann during the Second Empire, a new central structure was created—first in the handsome monumental masonry of the Seine embankment, and then in the great boulevards and new parks.

By creating a new outlet for sociability and conversation in the tree-lined promenade and the sidewalk cafe accessible even to older quarters that were still dismissively congested and hygienically deplorable, the planners of Paris democratized and humanized the otherwise sterile Baroque plan. The beauty and order of this new frame, which at once preserved the complexities of the older neighbourhoods and opened up new quarters threaded with broad public greens, attracted millions of visitors to Paris and—what was more important—helped increase the daily satisfaction of its inhabitants.

But while Paris improved its rich historic core, it lost out in form, as badly as London or Berlin, Philadelphia or Chicago, on its spreading periphery. The vitality and individuality that had been

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heightened by the boulevards, parks, and parkways of Paris were dependent upon historic institutions and many-sided activities that the new quarters lacked. Left to themselves, these residential quarters were deserts of pretentious monotony.

Today central Paris, too, is being annihilated by the same forces that produce the vast areas of urban nonentity that surround that living core of our own big cities. These forces are choking Paris today as they have choked cities in the United States, as new as Fort Worth (Texas) and as old as Boston.

Not the weakest of these destructive forces are those that operate under the guise of "up-to-date planning," in extravagant engineering projects, like the new motorways along both banks of the Seine—a self-negating improvement just as futile as the motorways that have deprived Boston and Cambridge of access to their most convenient and potentially most delightful recreation area along the Charles River.

This new order of planning makes the city more attractive temporarily to motorcars, and infinitely less attractive permanently to human beings. On the suburban outskirts of our cities everywhere in both Europe and America, high-rise apartments impudently counterfeit the urbanity they have actually left behind. Present-day building replaces the complex structure of the city with gray masses of gritty urbanoid tissue.

### *A Fresh Image*

The emptiness and sterility of so much that now goes under the rubric of modern city design is now being widely felt. Hence

the interest that has been awakened by books like Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, with its keen appreciation of some of the more intimate aspects of urban life, and with its contrasting criticism, largely deserved, of radical human deficiencies in the standardized, high-rise "urban renewal" projects.

The fact is that 20th century-planning still lacks a fresh multi-dimensional image of the city, partly because we have not discussed and sorted out the true values, functions and purposes of modern culture from many pseudo-values and apparently automatic processes that promise power or profit to those who promote them.

What has passed for a fresh image of the city turns out to be two forms of anti-city. One of these is a multiplication of standard, deindividualized high-rise structures, almost identical in form, whether they enclose offices, factories, administrative headquarters, or family apartments, set in the midst of a spaghetti tangle of traffic arteries, expressways, parking lots, and garages.

The other is the complementary but opposite image of urban scatter and romantic seclusion often called suburban, though it has in fact broken away from such order as the 19th century suburb had actually achieved, and even lacks such formal geometric coherence as Frank Lloyd Wright proposed to give it in his plans for Broadacre City.

The key to a fresh architectural image of the city as a whole lies in working toward an organic unit of urban order which will hold together its component parts through successive changes in function and purpose from generation to

generation. While such an archetypal image can never be fully realized, this concept of the city as a whole, restated in contemporary terms, will help to define the character of each institutional structure.

In general outline, though not in dramatic architectural form, such a unit was first achieved in the British New Towns, Letchworth and Welwyn, built in the first decades of the 20th century. These were the first towns since the Middle Ages to attempt to incorporate in a unified whole all the necessary features of the social and natural environment. Contrary to prevalent opinion, these pioneer communities originally called Garden Cities, built by private corporations under the restrictions of limited dividends, have been an economic success. Though their growth was at first slow, it was sound.

And in far more rapid fashion, the 22 British New Towns built or started between 1947 and 1968, now with government aid, have been even more strikingly successful. These New Towns were designed in accordance with Ebenezer Howard's principles: small enough to be manageable and accessible, but big enough to have diversity and balance. In many of their factory precincts, and in some of their new town centres, they vie with Coventry, Rotterdam, and Vallingby in delineating the beginning of a fresh urban form. Already nearly 500,000 people live in these salubrious towns, planned to contain from 15,000 to 90,000 people each; and ultimately they will hold a million.

Plainly Howard's method of integrating urban functions in units scaled to

human needs and purposes, to which bureaucratic and mechanical needs are subordinated, has proved viable even under a regime more or less committed to expanding these separate functions and profiting by their continued growth.

The new quarters in existing cities that have achieved anything like a comparable gain in health, social diversity, family-centred amenity, and varied economic opportunity are those which, like the rebuilt Borough of Stepney in London, have followed most closely the New Town formula of mixture, balance, and limitation of density.

#### *A Collective Personality*

This organic principle of urban growth and organization does not apply only to that part of the population which can no longer be packed into the existing metropolitan centres. One of the great causes for the wholesale exodus now taking place into the suburbs is that those who can make a choice are no longer content to put up with depleted physical environment and the often degraded social conditions of our "great American cities."

If the big cities hope to hold their population and continue to perform those special functions that depend upon large numbers of people, they themselves must have some of the spaciousness, the order, and the variety in their intimate, small-scale units that the New Town concept has brought into existence. Fortunately, the method Howard initiated can be applied equally to the redevelopment of the existing metropolitan centres.

Those of us who are pursuing further

the train of constructive thought that Howard so largely started and Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker first carried out in Britain cannot be content with any present embodiments of their ideas, though we no doubt have a duty to defend them from libelous caricature and ignorant abuse. Still less do we wish to make the existing New Towns a standard pattern for all urban integration, duly codified by law.

Such a stereotyping of the idea would eliminate the very richness and variety of concrete detail that is inherent in the notion of a city. For the city is nothing less than a collective personality whose character reflects its unique combination of geographic, economic, cultural, and historic factors. As William Blake put it, "One law for the lion and the ox is oppression."

Much has recently been learned about the social nature of the city and the meaning of its diversity that suggests further revisions, adaptations, and innovations. But first we must remove a current superstition: namely, the notion that the form and content of the city must primarily serve its technology and support its "expanding economy." This assumption turns the true order upside down. Perhaps the primary function of the city today is that of bringing technology itself into line with humane purpose, reducing speed, energy, quantification to amounts that are humanly assimilable and humanly valuable.

#### *Vehicles and Pedestrians*

Along these lines there has been a considerable amount of fresh architectural

and social invention, which awaits embodiment in the larger framework of the city. Thus the separation of fast-moving vehicles from the pedestrian—the principle applied in the first U.S. New Town of Radburn (New Jersey), or, more anciently, in Venice—not merely facilitates these two complementary modes of circulation, both still necessary, but also releases building from the old uniform lot-and-block pattern.

This makes it possible to plan super-blocks and precincts and neighbourhoods so as to serve a variety of functions related in space and form to the needs of the users, rather than to an arbitrary street pattern. That gives the architect in the city proper some of the freedom in composition that he has had only in the suburbs.

So, too, the new pedestrian shopping mall, as in Coventry, Rotterdam, and Stevenage, has already demonstrated advantages that neither the old shopping avenue nor the isolated suburban shopping centre, wallowing in a sea of parking space, can provide.

Still other innovations call for critical assessment and doubtless for further modification or for alternative solutions. Some of them, like the urban greenbelt, the Radburn plan of a continuous internal park, or the Perry conception of the balanced neighbourhood unit, have now been sufficiently tested to provide useful data for judgment.

Not least, the notion of a single ideal residential density calls for further reconsideration; for it has become clear that the British New Towns were overspaced, and that the hygienic and recreational advantages of abundant open spaces

must be integrated with the social and domestic needs for cohesion, intimacy, and spontaneous association, which demand somewhat higher densities and the preservation of the pedestrian scale.

#### *Expressways, Boulevards, Cafes*

Meanwhile, many older inventions in planning call for fresh expression. The 19th century boulevard or parkway, in which pedestrians and vehicles shared the same space, has long been obsolete. But its latest specialized form, the expressway, must be routed out of the city, if the city is to have a life of its own.

Once the expressway enters the city, it undertakes an impossible task of canalizing into a few arteries what must be circulated through a far more complex system of arteries, veins, and capillaries. Only the fullest use of the whole system, restored for general circulation, with public vehicles undertaking the major burden, will rectify the mistakes of mono-transportation in urban areas.

As for the discarded element in the boulevard—the green walkway—it must be restored as a separate system, detached from wheeled vehicles, as is now being done in the Society Hill district of Philadelphia. For the same reason, that other by-product of the boulevard, the sidewalk cafe—now ruined by the noise and fumes of motor traffic—must take refuge in tiny neighbourhood parks, such as those in Central Athens, though they might easily survive as a socially enlivening feature in the interior of a superblock.

These many innovations and rectifications call for increasing integration in formal designs, which will set a new pat-

tern for each part of the city. But to demand a clean-minted urban image from the work of a single architect, or even a single generation, is to misunderstand the essentially cumulative nature of the city. An organic image of the city requires for its actual fulfilment a dimension that no single generation can ever supply: it requires time, not merely an individual lifetime, but many collective lifetimes.

The now popular concept of the city as a disposable container, to be replaced at a profit every decade or every generation, in order to feed an expanding economy, denies the most valuable function of the city as an organ of social memory; namely, its linking up the generations, its bringing into the present both the usable past and the desirable future.

No organic design for any large urban area can be completed once and for all, like a Baroque city established by royal fiat, by wiping out all existing structures and replacing them by the fashionable current model. This futurist method would put the city at the mercy of five-year-old knowledge and five-year-old minds, and the resulting loss of memory is no less a serious impairment to the life of the city than the loss of memory in people whose brains have been injured by shock or senility.

In a sense, then, there can be no single modern architectural form of the city. Part of what was modern 50 years ago is by now vitally historic and as worthy of sedulous preservation as any ancient building in so far as it still serves new uses, while other examples of what was once modern have long been obsolete and should be removed; indeed, what looks brightly modern only for the year in which

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it was built is usually out of date before it is finished.

The greater the inherent dynamism of science, techniques, and finance, today, the greater need there is for a durable urban container. For as I pointed out in *The City in History*, when the container changes as rapidly as the contents, neither can perform their necessary but complementary functions.

Here at last we have, I believe, an essential key to sound urban and architectural design today: it must not merely welcome variety and complexity in all their forms, environmental, social, and personal, but it must also deliberately leave a place for continued rectification, improvement, innovation, and renewal. When soundly designed, such an urban form will be fulfilled, not spoiled, by the increment of each succeeding generation, as the medieval city was in fact improved by interpolating squares and buildings that mirrored the new spatial order of the Renaissance.

Now the cities of the past often over-emphasized continuity. Their builders entombed life in all-too-massive permanent structures and in even more rigid routines that resisted growth and prevented the necessary modifications each generation must make. But the cities of today have just the opposite vice: while their neglected quarters fester, their favoured 'dynamic' areas are too ephemeral to foster human growth and cultural continuity.

Our age tends to think of complexity in purely mechanical terms, and to reduce social and human relations to simplified abstract units that lend themselves easily to centralized direction and mechanical control. Hence the brilliantly sterile

images that LeCorbusier and Mies van der Rohe projected; images that magnify power, suppress diversity, nullify choice, have swept across the planet as the "new form of the city."

This identification of modern form with uniform buildings, which one finds too often even in recent surveys of modern architecture, should be as outmoded as the bureaucratic animus to which it pays homage. Such oversimplification of form is now eating the heart out of our projects of urban renewal.

By contrast, a new image of the city which does justice to all its dimensions can be no simple overnight job: for it must include the form-shaping contributions of nature—of river, bay, hill, forest, vegetation, climate—as well as those of human history and culture, with the complex interplay of groups, corporations, organizations, institutions, personalities. Let us not then unduly regret our slowness in arriving at an expressive and unified form for the modern city.

### *An Adequate Form*

A truly modern design for a city must be one that allows for both its historic and social complexity, and for its continued renewal and reintegration in time. No single instantaneous image, which reflects the needs of a particular moment, can encompass the feelings and sentiments that bring the generations together in working partnership, binding the past that has never died to the future that is already in process of gestation.

This interpretation of urban form indicates that the same cultural factors underlie both the possibility of renewal in

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existing cities, however big, and the building of new towns, however small. As energy and productivity increase, a larger proportion will be available for the humanization of man; and this task, despite many ominous contrary indications today, is still the essential task of the

city.

Only those who seek to respond to this challenge will be able to give the city an adequate form: a form that will bring within the range and grasp of every citizen the wider world on which his life and well-being depend.

# THE EXPERIMENTAL CITY

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ATHELSTAN SPILHAUS

*Dr. Spilhaus, head of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia, is a meteorologist and oceanographer, now active in city planning. He conceived the idea of an "Experimental City," described below, as a means to test new concepts in urban living and urban technology and to apply to city planning the computerized laboratory methods which have proved successful in other fields. Among his books are "Satellite of the Sun," "The Science of the Earth and Its Surroundings," and "Turn to the Sea."*

Most CITIES grow unplanned; they just spread haphazardly, like a thicket of thorns or a colony of mold on a piece of cheese. The result is the present urban mess—too many students for the schools, too much sludge for the sewers, too many cars for the highways, too many sick for the hospitals, too much crime for the police, too many commuters for the transport system, too many fumes for the atmosphere to bear, too many chemicals for the water to carry.

Half of the people in the United States live on one per cent of the land, and there is a continual drift to the big cities. Urban renewal encourages the increase in the size of the cities. Two or three-story slum buildings are torn down, and sterile, high-rise, so-called low-cost housing brings more people into the centre of the city than ever before, compounding the problem.

As Secretary of the Interior Stewart

Udall recently pointed out, the country's annual population growth of four million people "increases the physical and social pressures, causes us to seek quick remedies, leads us to waste too much wealth on quick-fix projects that provide at best a temporary respite from yesterday's mistakes."

I have proposed, as a corrective, the development of a system of dispersed cities of controlled size differing in many respects from conventional cities, and surrounded by ample areas of open land. If the present 200 million people in the United States were living in 800 cities with a population of a quarter of a million each, and if these cities were scattered evenly across the United States, we would not have the pollution, the traffic congestion, the riots, and many of the other ills that develop where cities become too large.

No engineer or industry would pro-

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ceed to build anything so costly and complicated as a city without having an experimental prototype. The experience of many industries tells us that it is often cheaper to build a new modern plant than to patch an old one.

Similarly, it may be cheaper and more beneficial to create a new city than to try to rehabilitate an old one. This is the concept behind the Minnesota plan for an Experimental City.

### *Building from Scratch*

The project simply could not be accomplished through any attempt to rebuild a present city, regardless of its size or location, for, without exception, our cities are bound by tradition, outmoded building codes, restrictive legislation, and the consequences of unplanned, unhealthy growth.

We must be prepared to discard old codes and conventions and to experiment with new and radical ideas. We must utilize the most advanced methods of construction, transportation, communications, waste removal, and city management.

For these reasons the Experimental City Steering Committee has begun to work on the organization and financing of a scheme to build an experimental city from scratch, to house a quarter of a million people and the industry and commerce needed to support them.

The Experimental City will be unlike other cities that similarly started from scratch. It will not be a bedroom satellite of an existing city, like some of the New Towns in England. It will not be a single occupation town, devoted to atomic

research like Oak Ridge and Los Alamos or to government like Chandigarh, Brasilia and Washington.

Nor should it be confused with "demonstration" or "model" cities which try to show what can be done temporarily to renew old cities, although it will conduct experiments based on the experiences of such "model" cities.

The Experimental City will try to represent a true cross-section of urban America—in terms of people, income levels, business and industry, recreation, education, health care, and cultural opportunities. It will be designed for an optimum population size, and its growth will be stopped when it reaches this number. It will provide a laboratory for experimentation and a prototype for future cities of high concentration and controlled size.

Funds have been allocated by the federal government and private industry for studies to define more precisely the character of the Experimental City. In the first stage, surveys were made of existing literature and past experience, and exploratory conferences and workshops were held, under the auspices of the University of Minnesota.

The next phases will include: laboratory evaluations of new concepts and systems, experimentation with small-scale models, and construction of a pilot model. Then the city will be designed, constructed and occupied. Finally, after it has been in operation for some time, the Experimental City will be studied further, changed and developed.

The final stages—building the city and supervising its operations—will be the responsibility of a quasi-govern-

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mental, quasi-private corporation, following the example of the Communications Satellite Corporation, which owns and operates various satellites for telephone, teletype, television and data transmission purposes.

### *Planning from Below*

Early in planning the Minnesota Experimental City we set some guidelines. (1) The ultimate maximum population would be a quarter of a million. The community would be (2) economically viable as a unit of the U.S. economy, (3) truly experimental, (4) at least 100 miles from any major existing urban centre, and (5) a densely populated centre surrounded by open land.

This surrounding land, which would have an area perhaps 100 times that of the densely populated centre, would be used for forests, outdoor museums, recreation, or agriculture, or just left as a rural area.

Plans for building the Experimental City differ in many respects from plans for building other kinds of cities. Conventional cities grow above the ground, and as they grow, and as people demand transportation, power, water, gas, and sewers, the ground and rock underneath the city are tunnelled for subways or the streets are dug up and the utility lines are buried.

In the Experimental City the whole substructure will be planned and built either by excavation or by building on the natural surface and then raising the "ground level" on which the city dwellers tread. Power lines and utility lines will be installed, before the city is built.

Knowledge that the city is to be of a certain size will make this possible.

Much of the equipment for servicing the city will be invisible and inaudible underground. Water and building materials can be stored there. Heating plants and cold-storage facilities can be located there. Underground pipelines can carry out solid wastes conventionally carried by trucks. Snow and rainwater from the streets can be channelled to underground reservoirs.

Pollution-producing vehicles can come in underground, and fume sewers can take the gases out to scrubbing and processing plants in the surrounding open-land area. Air-burning vehicles that connect the city with the rest of the nation can be parked underground. Police, ambulance, and emergency vehicles will all have underground throughways.

By eliminating the need for some service vehicles, restricting those that are needed to the substructure, and providing a free-above-the-ground transportation system (discussed below), we hope to eliminate all vehicles from ground-level streets.

A lawyer at one of our planning sessions asked whether the Experimental City might not eventually disintegrate and become merely a more modern, but no more effective, city complex. "If Chicago, Minneapolis, and New York are willing to allow smoke to billow from new factories," he said, "if they permit automobiles to crowd their streets, and if they do not restrict building construction from occurring in illogical patterns, why should we expect anything different in the Experimental City?"

The answer is simple. Industries, before they are selected or approved for participation in the Experimental City, must agree to abide by the city's building programmes. They will be required to conform to certain waste-disposal methods. Presumably they will be willing to do so because they will benefit from the City's central waste-processing facilities, smoke sewers, and other underground disposal facilities.

#### *Construction and Disassembly*

All the buildings in the Experimental City will be constructed of the newest light-weight materials, and modular techniques of assembly will be used. Thus buildings can be easily erected and quickly disassembled as we learn what is needed, and as needs change.

The average useful life of a building has been estimated to be between 20 and 30 years. All buildings in the Experimental City will be designed with this in mind, and methods of construction that leave permanent outmoded monuments, or later require the services of the wrecking crew, will be abandoned. We will get away from the idea of building forever and, instead, will build for living, recognizing that people have continually changing desires.

With new building materials and freedom from obsolete codes and building practices, both public buildings and commercial structures can be made extremely flexible, with adjustable floors, curtain-walls, and ceiling heights. It may even be possible to use inflatable buildings, which can be instantly deflated.

Housing units may be precast, even

prefurnished, in the manner of Expo's Habitat, with units put together like building blocks and arranged and rearranged as desired. Practical application of this idea is no dream. Precast rooms were used recently in building San Antonio's Hilton Hotel.

The disassembly of building will resemble the disassembly of an erector set. Reusable components of the building will be swallowed by the city's substructure. There will be no cluttering of streets with cranes and other moving equipment. An obsolete building will disappear like ice cream that melts and drains out through the truncated bottom of the cone. In building new structures, the process will be the reverse. Materials will be lifted from the substructure into the middle of the site, and adjacent activities will not be disturbed.

Certain parts of the Experimental City probably will be domed, so that the advantages and disadvantages of totally enclosed cities can be determined. It is our current view that not all of the city should be domed. Dombing only a part of it will enable us to determine the extreme of climate under which total enclosure is economical and acceptable. In this domed portion which may enclose a medical complex, we can undertake experiments on allergy control, and studies of acoustics, ventilation, and maintenance of a clean atmosphere.

Buckminster Fuller, the designer of the geodesic dome, estimates that a dome two miles in diameter, made of glass, would cost an estimated \$80 million, but it would eliminate the need for snow removal and would make heating more efficient and less costly. Savings equiva-

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lent to the cost of its construction could be achieved in a 10-year period.

### *Recycling Wastes*

With a controlled city, savings can be realized, too, through new methods of waste collection and through use, reuse, and recycling of wastes. It may not be possible to achieve complete recycling immediately, although that objective would always be borne in mind in our planning. Total recycling is the ultimate answer to the waste problem for a closed-system earth.

Imaginative things are being done to control waste at its source. Fly ash from smokestacks is collected for use in making cement and bricks, but, so far only one sixteenth of the total has a market; a plant in Florida uses a city's garbage to make fertilizer; dust from grain elevators is made into pellets for cattle feed; iron-ore dust from steel plants is fed back to make steel; sulphur dioxide from factory chimneys and sulphur from oil refineries are made into sulphuric acid.

There are examples of industrial symbiosis where one industry feeds off, or at least neutralizes, the wastes of another—inorganic wastes from a chemical plant may neutralize the over-abundance of organic nutrients from sewage and prevent uncontrollable growth of algae.

In many of these cases, the cost of recovery far exceeds the value of the recovered material. But if a clean environment is our aim, it costs the nation less to recover wastes where they are generated, even if they have no value, than to clean them up after they have

been dispersed. Costs resulting from control at the source must be passed on in the cost of the product, but the total increase in manufacturing costs would not compare to the amount the nation would have to spend for cleaning up after the filth is dispersed in rivers, in the air, or on the land.

In the pollution-free Experimental City the utility tunnels would carry away the liquid and gaseous wastes, and many of the solid wastes, to the processing plants. New systems for moving wastes may be used—pneumatic, hydraulic conveyors or unitized trains.

If we can reduce the bulk of solid wastes and package them suitably, special trains and trucks can take them away from the city to the open-land area, where they can be processed and then stored or reused, perhaps to build ski slopes, arenas, or other recreation facilities. Wastes that are not immediately reused can be sorted and stored in "mountains," to be mined when reuse becomes economically desirable.

In water-rich areas, water can be used first for drinking and then reused at least twice, for cooling and then for purposes of recreation. But if the Experimental City is to show the way for cities in arid areas, complete recycling of part of the water should be attempted.

One simple example is a totally enclosed green house in the desert. Water with dissolved plant foods flows into hydroponic gardens, is transpired by the plants in the hot part of the greenhouse, sucked to a cooled part where it recondenses and acquires more dissolved nutrients to repeat the cycle. The only water needed is a cupful now

and then to offset leakage.

Applied to cities, this concept would mean that once a city's water storage tanks were filled, it would need no further water supply, except perhaps a small amount once in a while to compensate for evaporation. No water would be discharged into streams as sewage; it would all be treated, recycled and used over again and over again.

#### *Transportation by Pods*

One of the most pressing problems of our urban living is transportation and the use, care, parking, and garaging of the private automobile.

Constantinos Doxiadis, the noted Greek city planner, recognizes that it is a tragedy when our city buildings are primarily designed to accommodate cars, both stationary and moving, and thus destroy the "human scale." Lewis Mumford points out that the private car no longer performs the role of "facilitating meeting and sociability" and that its "assumed right" is a "license to destroy a city."

How can we provide people with a transportation system that facilitates the desirable social relationships which constitute the joy of city living yet does not have undesirable side effects?

We must remember not to force people into what is technologically easy, but to find a technological solution which is practical and closely meets their desires. What people basically like about the private automobile is the fact that it is a small pod and gives them a sense of privacy in a world where any kind of privacy is becoming a scarce luxury.

They also like the automobile because it takes them from where they are to where they want to go without stopping where everybody else wants to stop.

But when so many automobiles crowd the streets that we cannot move because of traffic jams, and when our average speed in a pollution-producing vehicle is eight miles an hour, it is time to look at the alternatives.

Now in the process of design are many systems that can move people in motorless, driverless, noiseless, semi-private pods—computer-controlled so that passengers travel from where they are to where they want to go without stopping. If you want to go to the store you don't go to the station and then walk to the store; your pod is sidetracked right into the store.

The various systems have a common denominator: they are driven by a propulsion system built into the track. The pods are inexpensive, thus many of them can be used at the same time.

Moving sidewalks, moving platforms, and other wheel-less systems are all technically feasible. One important concept that has emerged in our discussions is this: if we are to use mass transportation in the Experimental City it should be free, like elevator service. You don't pay a fare to ride vertically in an elevator. Why should you pay a fare to ride horizontally? The cost can be embodied in the service costs of the city.

Eliminating the automobile by means of a modern transport system of this kind does away with the need for freeways and traffic control, eliminates smog, saves lives, lessens stress, and saves valuable space. Making the transit

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system free saves the costs otherwise associated with ticket-selling and ticket-taking.

Because free transportation would reduce or eliminate the sale of automobiles, the parking-lot business, and other business basic to the economy of older cities, it can be introduced readily only in a newly planned, centrally governed city such as the Experimental City.

### *Communications*

Among the greatest innovations that can be tried in the Experimental City are the new technologies in communications that have been developed but not yet put to practical use.

The current view is that radio frequencies should be reserved for purposes, such as communication to or from a vehicle in motion, where wires are not feasible. The substructure of the Experimental City would be wired, and coaxial cable would reach to every point where, conventionally, there would be a telephone. These wires and cables can be planned and located in the substructure even before we have a clear-cut idea of what terminals, picture-phones, computers, facsimile machines, and the like may ultimately be needed.

Such a communication system can provide access from any point to large highspeed digital computers, for purposes of city management (on the basis of real information), crime prevention through the use of video monitors, and maintenance of up-to-the-minute data banks for the social experiment that the city constitutes.

The same lines, in conjunction with

smaller computers and other video terminals, can provide a means of decentralizing schools and hospitals and of bringing together electronically the now separated functions of shopping, charging, banking, credit, and business. Video terminals can even provide "tele-babysitting." The advanced system will provide an ideal laboratory for determining how to insure privacy of computer use yet insure that computers are used to the maximum benefit of society.

### *Architecture and Art*

The Experimental City would also provide opportunities for test-marketing new products, building materials, and postal systems. New materials would give architects a tremendous scope in developing new forms. No traffic at ground level and no land owned by individuals or individual corporations would offer a degree of freedom not possible in cities where ownership of property delimits plots. Even the materials used in the buildings themselves would be such that they could be taken down and reused if found to be obsolete or inferior.

Architecture, with its emphasis on form and the visual environment, is fundamental to the success of the Experimental City. Architects would be freer to exploit the mutuality of function and form in producing a visual environment with other improved qualities. In Philadelphia, for example, the planners have done a magnificent job of improving the visual environment, but their work is mitigated by the stench of oil refineries.

In the Experimental City, we will seek a total optimum environment without hampering diversity of architectural forms and combinations. We will experiment with enclosing portions of the city within domes that will be conditioned as to temperature, humidity, fumes, and light.

It is, of course, not at all certain that people want a perfectly controlled climate. The sense of beauty and well-being involves exposure to some degree of variation. Artists know this in their play with light and shade and with colours that clash. Slight breezes and variations of temperature might be necessary to transform even clean air into the fresh air that stimulates our sense of health.

Many artists feel that art centres, now so much in fashion, are already outmoded, and that the newest forms of music, art, theatre, and dance have very little to do with exhibit galleries, proscenium stages, and conventional auditoriums. Increased leisure should lead to active participation in all the arts instead of passive exposure. For this we need an arts-recreation space completely flexible in lighting, sound, television, film, electronic devices, and physical dimensions.

Buckminster Fuller, architect and imaginative member of our Experimental City Steering Committee, feels that industry of the future, largely automated, will be located outside the cities, and that the many functions of the city which in the past were directed toward facilitating the exchange of physical goods will in the future be directed toward the exchange of what

he calls metaphysical values—ideas, learning, and culture.

### *Populating the City*

How will the Experimental City be populated? Once we have decided on a city's optimum size, how do we prevent the uncontrolled growth that leads to many of today's urban problems?

Politicians say you can't move people. Many sociologists who are more interested in studying what is happening and predicting doom than in taking the steps necessary to avert it, agree. But the fact is that, with our existing legal and governmental structure, we do move people. We push people around everywhere, always with the excuse that it is for their good.

We move them in wars; we displace them when we build highways; and we move them when we clear slums and build much larger buildings than there were before. We move them, but often in the wrong direction, into the already over-grown cities.

Urban renewal in its worst manifestations is the construction of the slums of the future. Many people in the present overgrown cities might like to move out into new complexes which provided the advantages of city life without the physical and social distress. Many others whom the authorities say they cannot move have never contemplated moving because they have been trapped, lacking the opportunity to go anywhere else. The fact is that most of those who can afford to do so have already fled the cities, to suburbs that will become the slums of tomorrow.

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We must build a city for today's city-dwellers and suburb-dwellers to go to. We must provide people with a different choice, not just that between life in a dirty overgrown city with suburbs or a completely rural existence. We can provide a middle choice—clean cities of controlled size, with plenty of space and an exciting new environment.

The answer is *not* to control individuals, but to design a mix of industrial, commercial, and other employment opportunities that keeps the population in a healthy equilibrium. In the absence of better information on the proportion in a healthy mix, perhaps we should start with a cross-section of the United States.

The whole concept behind the Experimental City begins and ends with people. Profiles of employees in various enterprises can be studied by wage level, group preferences, and any other factors important to a healthy representative sample, including the right quota of those dependent on welfare, the very young, and the old and retired.

As a total experiment in social science, human ecology, environmental biology, and environmental engineering, the Experimental City would lend itself to a totally new concept of modern preventive medicine. Instead of focussing on healing the sick, doctors would contribute to the public-health concept that emphasizes the building up and banking of a capital of health and vigour while young, and the prudent spending of this capital over a lifetime without deficits of ill health.

They would concentrate on eliminating ailments in early life rather than on repairing later ills. Their dedication,

somewhat less personal in public health, would be, in a sense, what Dr. Walsh McDermott calls 'statistical compassion.'

### *Management and Cost*

Who will manage the Experimental City?

It would seem that the idea of running a city as a public utility by a quasi-public, quasi-private corporation should be tried. Present-day hotel complexes, with their associated shops, restaurants, transportation facilities, and so on, are growing larger and larger. Many of them are run very well. It is not much of a jump to think of experimental cities of controlled size as huge hotels. It seems to me that management of the city-hotel-corporation type should be tried.

Daniel Moynihan, director of the Harvard-M.I.T. Joint Centre for Urban Studies, says realistically that the government cannot do everything well, and that many public services are best contracted to private enterprises. In the Experimental City, contracts for many such services would be let on a performance basis.

The federal government, too, is beginning to move in this direction. Agencies have let contracts to private enterprise for carrying out social work programmes. Why not go the whole way and have responsible corporations provide all the services needed in the Experimental City?

It is realistic to recognize that a large sum of money is needed for planning and building the services substructure, which will utilize new technologies in-

volving costly experimentation and research. Part of the construction costs could legitimately be funded by a Federal Housing Authority mortgage.

Part of the costs of experimentation and research would be met by the private sector. Imaginative American industry needs a place, a city laboratory, in which to try out new technologies of waste management, communication, transportation, and construction. Industries are at present investing large sums in elements of these areas. Our plan for the Experimental City shows that it is the best and most economical place to do this research.

#### *Other Approaches*

Other approaches to the problems of today's cities are being tried. The government's Model City programme, an urban renewal programme administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is an attempt to alleviate the overwhelming problems of the overgrown cities. The objective is a most important one, but in general the means used are the tearing out of slums and their replacement with new construction. The government is becoming the new slum landlord.

Worthwhile experiments in the building of new cities are being made by private enterprise. Examples are Columbia, Maryland; Disneyworld's experimental prototype city in Florida; and Westinghouse's community proving ground in Florida. More than 200 "new cities" are either in the design stage or under construction in the United States.

These government-financed and pri-

vately financed "new cities" are similar to the Minnesota Experimental City in one respect: they are built from scratch. On the other hand they are, in the best meaning of the term, real estate developments, and consequently they tend to be satellites of existing urban complexes—communities where people live and from which they commute to work.

That this is the case may be seen from the fact that almost all of the "new cities" are growing along the coastlines—East, West, and Gulf of Mexico—where the overgrown cities already are. Generally their size is not controlled, and one can anticipate that even the best of them, such as Reston (Virginia) and Columbia, will be swallowed up as nearby urban complexes—in this case Washington and Baltimore—expand.

Because they do not have sufficient reserved open land around them, even the best of the "new cities" will become engulfed; moreover, since they are close to existing huge cities, they cannot develop with enough independence to try novel technologies.

#### *Dispersal of Cities*

It is obvious to me that we must use all of our land for living, not just tiny fractions of it. To do this we must look at solutions that envisage urban dispersal, and if we are to disperse into new planned cities, a national experimental cities programme is an urgent must.

Suppose we built an experimental city in every one of our 50 states. If each such city were populated by a quarter of a million people, we could care for

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only 12 1/2 million people, barely the predicted increase of population in the United States in 3 years.

Yet, according to our most optimistic estimates, just the building of an experimental city will take longer than 3 years, and if we merely keep up with the increase in population we will do nothing to alleviate the problems of overgrowth in our existing cities.

The problems of our large cities indicate an urgent need to move toward the dispersal concept immediately. If the need is urgent in the United States, it is even more urgent in the world as a whole, especially in those countries where the birthrate is much higher than ours.

Let us look ahead and suppose that the world population, if we do nothing about population control, reaches 15 billion by A.D. 2068. And let us assume that our technology permits us to build cities on any solid land, from Antarctica to the tropics, from desert to rain forest. The area of all the continents is about 2.3 billion acres. If we built cities of controlled size, dispersed throughout the world, there would be 60,000 cities of a quarter of a million people each, and each such city would be surrounded by 40,000 acres, or 62 square miles, of open land.

The alternative of allowing the present big cities to grow unplanned, or to accelerate their growth through so-called urban renewal, would mean that vast tracts of the earth's surface would

be un-inhabited and the urban complexes would be intolerable.

(There is no magic in the figure of a quarter of a million. It may be that a city of half a million would better provide the choices that people want, or it may be that cities of different sizes would be needed. The important thing is that the size be controlled and that the cities be kept within a small area, with bounds, so that they would remain surrounded by open land.)

The advent of atomic power opens up the possibility of building verdant cities even in desert areas, if these areas are near the sea. An atomic plant which would generate a million kilowatts of electricity could distill half a billion gallons of fresh water from seawater and, from the residue, make enough fertilizer to grow the food to feed the entire populations of ten cities the size of the proposed experimental city.

We must try these schemes and others that will emerge. Clearly, we cannot continue to experiment in bits: each new technology affects others.

Better communications change patterns of travel, medical care, and education. New methods of cleaning and noiseproofing make zoning unnecessary.

The city is a completely interacting system, and, thus, the experiment must be a total system. Nobody knows the answers to city living in the future, and when answers are unknown, experiment is essential.

# SHELTER IN AN URBANIZING WORLD

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BERNARD TAPER

*Charles Abrams, head of Columbia University's Division of Urban Planning, "has left a recognizable mark on the housing policies of some twenty-one nations," according to Bernard Taper, an author who is a consultant for the Joint Centre of Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. In the following article Mr. Taper describes the work on four continents of the man who has headed many United Nations advisory missions on housing.*

A UNIVERSAL FEATURE of modern civilization is the housing problem. In primitive or static societies, the simplest of habitations suffice in terms of the requirements and patterns of daily life and of the society's concepts and possibilities.

Communities of Eskimo igloos or Dodoth huts are not slums—if for no other reason than that nobody in the cultures concerned thinks of them as such. It is only as traditional cultures begin to advance, to develop—"to

emerge," as the current term has it—that shelter suddenly presents a grievous problem.

The housing problem as we know it is, like modern civilization itself, essentially an urban phenomenon. The world is being urbanized at an accelerated—possibly a catastrophic—pace. In the United States, which was only five per cent urban at the time our Constitution was written (codifying our values in essentially agrarian terms), 70 per cent of the

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population now lives in cities or suburbs. By the end of this century, it is estimated, as much as 97 per cent of the people will be urbanites.

In the developing areas of the world, which until lately have remained basically rural in character, urbanization is now taking place three or four times as fast as it is in the United States. This stems partly from the natural population growth, which is proceeding at an alarming pace, and partly from great internal migrations.

During the present decade in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, according to a recent United Nations study, some two hundred million people who have dwelt in rural areas all their lives will pick up their belongings and move to the cities. It is in these regions, where many of the cities have undergone the strain of a threefold or fourfold increase in population over the past twenty years, that the housing problem shows up in its most exacerbated form.

The U.N. study estimates that possibly as much as half the total population of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—that is, about a billion people—is at present homeless or living under conditions that are an affront to human dignity, to say nothing of human health.

### *Rising Expectations?*

The masses of migrants who have come crowding into the cities in all the developing areas, seeking a better way of life than that known by their forebears, are the shock troops in what is frequently characterized as "the revolution of rising expectations." The phrase suggests that

their troubles are essentially psychological—that they might be content if they had never glimpsed the dazzling abundance that contemporary technology makes possible.

Yet not only were most of these people better housed in the communities they came from but history suggests that mankind—that vast mass of mankind outside the advanced regions of the West—has probably never been as badly housed as it is in our era.

Though a housing crisis afflicts every one of the eighty or so developing nations, the governments of very few of them have had much notion of how to begin to cope with the immense complications inherent in sudden urbanization. They have lacked the capital, the economy, the industries, the skills, and, perhaps most important, the concepts for undertaking mass housing programmes. They have also lacked the essential legal basis for such an undertaking, for it requires a whole new framework of law and, generally, new conceptions in regard to the relationship of the government to property and to the population.

In recent years, some of the emerging countries have tried various glamorous panaceas—such as prefabrication—which have, for the most part, resulted in expensive, disheartening fiascoes. Some of the other countries have tried nothing at all. Having allowed themselves to be stunned by the magnitude of the problem into a kind of despairing apathy, they have hoped that if they ignore the crisis it will somehow solve itself.

In the quandary that all these nations face, a number of them have taken one useful step—that of asking the United

Nations to send an advisory mission to size up the situation and offer practical suggestions. A man whom the U.N. likes to send out as the head of such a mission, when he is available, is Charles Abrams, a resourceful, often provocative, immensely knowledgeable New York housing and city-planning expert, who has left a recognizable mark on the housing policies of some twenty-one nations and who, in most of them, has shown a remarkable knack for getting some kind of results even under the most adverse conditions.

Abrams is a thoroughgoing New Yorker, who heads Columbia University's Division of Urban Planning and, over the years, has functioned in a variety of ways as a major influence on New York City's housing practices. Nonetheless, he has shown himself to be highly adept at comprehending the special needs and problems of such distant places as Santiago, Nairobi, La Paz, Singapore, Lagos, Karachi, Accra, Ankara, and Davao.

The economist Barbara Ward, in reviewing a book by Abrams called *Man's Struggle for Shelter in an Urbanizing World* for *The New York Times*, wrote, "Probably no expert in the field of housing knows the developing world as does Mr. Abrams."

#### *A Lover of Cities*

The fact is that Abrams is an unabashed lover of cities, wherever they may be and however badly off they are. He often quotes Socrates' remark: "Fields and trees teach me nothing, but the people in a city do." The current urbanization of the world does not dis-

may Abrams, as it does some observers. Despite all the wretched and distressing aspects of contemporary cities that he has seen, and all that he knows needs to be done to improve life in them, he has never ceased to esteem cities as the source of the cultural values that have mattered most to humanity throughout the ages.

*Man's Struggle for Shelter* is a sober, often grim, sometimes highly technical book. Yet it contains rhapsodic passages, reflecting his view of the role that the city has played in history and in myth.

"From earliest history the city has been linked with man's freedoms—a refuge in the days of Cain and Joshua, the hub of a vigorous political life in Greece, the impetus to law in Rome," he writes. "When man's mind roamed free in Utopian dreams, it was the city that was so often closest to his conception of heaven: the 'Celestial City,' the 'Heavenly City,' the 'New Jerusalem,' the 'Holy City,' and the 'City of God'..."

"The city still harbours the hope, in an increasingly hazardous and complex society, that the social and economic fluidity which was its historic attribute can be maintained against the chaotic forces that challenge it. It is still the marketplace for goods and ideas, the locus of a contractual society, the mirror for emulation, the meeting place for diversities, the centre of culture."

This, at any rate, has been the city's role in Europe and the United States. The cities of the developing nations, however, are having a harder time of it right now than ours have ever had. Instead of simply repeating the experiences that our cities went through during the industrial revolution, they are under-

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going much more drastic changes. As Abrams points out, the developing nations are experiencing simultaneously the shocks of four different kinds of revolution—land, social, technological, and political—which the Western industrial nations were fortunate enough to undergo sequentially over a long span of time, and it is in the cities that the shock waves of these upheavals converge.

To Abrams, whom the *Times* has characterized as “the champion of the urban dweller,” it is of the utmost urgency to provide these troubled cities with whatever aid may be needed to help them cope. He has long deplored the tendency of our overseas assistance programmes to disregard the necessity for urban reforms and to concentrate upon programmes of agrarian reform.

“Revolutions are made in the cities, yet we are giving our aid to the farmers,” he has said. “How come?” In recent years, the Agency for International Development has begun to pay more attention to urban needs, so Abrams’ harping on this theme may have had some effect.

### *A One-Man Team*

Abrams has said that any housing expert worth his salt should have a thorough grasp of economics, law, urban land policies, real estate practices, architecture, construction methods, sociology, politics, administration, and public relations. Upon being apprised of this definition, a colleague of his, Lloyd Rodwin, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who is the chairman

of the Faculty Committee of the Joint Centre for Urban Studies of M.I.T. and Harvard, observed, “Wouldn’t you know it? Abrams has come up with a definition that fits only himself. No housing expert in the world that I know of besides him comes even close to possessing all those qualifications.” Of the various branches of knowledge or expertise on Abrams’ list, he is probably weakest in architecture and design; in all the rest he has shown himself to be as proficient as most specialists. “Abrams is not just a consultant,” one U.N. official has said. “He’s a team all by himself.”

Abrams is a stocky, nearly bald man in his late sixties. He has a round face, a large, opinionated nose and a broad, expressive mouth. Born into the world (as a Corinthian envoy once said of the Athenians) to take no rest himself and to give none to others, he nevertheless seems to enjoy the world immensely, even when he is most strenuously engaged in trying to change it. In spite of the formidable schedule of activities that Abrams maintains, he is a man who rarely appears harried or hurried. He is one of those fortunate people who can cruise along at high speed in some sort of overdrive, with very little wear and tear on the engine.

In October, 1954, when Abrams headed a U.N. housing mission to what is now Ghana, not long before that country achieved independence, its Governor-General, Sir Charles Arden-Clarke, with whom he was staying, thought it necessary to let Abrams know, after he had been there a few days applying himself in his customary fashion, that in that part of the world only mad dogs and

Englishmen went out in the midday sun, but not even *they* started their day's activities at 6 a.m. and went right through till late at night without a rest. Sir Charles had to admit, though, that Abrams did not seem to be suffering.

#### *Frozen Assets*

Among the fundamental problems that Abrams' mission had to tackle in Accra was the lack of any sort of mortgage credit system in the new nation. People who wanted to save up for a house, Abrams found, did not open a savings account or deposit their money anywhere else at interest but, rather, put it directly into the building materials they were going to need, accumulating the makings of a house little by little over the years. Each payday a man might save enough to buy one cement block. In vacant lots and back yards throughout Accra, Abrams saw piles of cement blocks and other materials, often covered with weeds.

He pointed out to the government that these were a tangible example of frozen assets, useless for years, and a strong argument for the development of some sort of credit mechanism that would satisfy the citizen's desire to save for a home in a way that was socially and economically productive, permitting the nation's resources and limited capital to be put to use at once.

Norman Thomas once said that one of Abrams' most useful talents was his ability to point out the obvious. So it was in this instance. Nobody had ever brought this matter home to the Ghanaians quite so clearly before, and they

were impressed. The Accra newspapers carried photographs of the back yard accumulations of building materials, captioned "Frozen Assets—United Nations Expert Says." All this facilitated the subsequent establishment of a building-and-loan savings programme.

As Abrams sees it, the job of an outside adviser in a developing country is not to import Western methods but rather to make sure that the methods are suitable to that particular country, and to modify them if they are not.

"Western products and techniques often have a specious glamour for the emerging countries," he says. "Sometimes the best function that a U.N. adviser can perform is to point out to them that certain of their old ways of doing things, which they are now ashamed of, are actually as good as newfangled Western ways, if not better."

#### *Plans Suited to the Country*

Those who have observed Abrams in action on his U.N. missions say that one of his most notable assets is his unfeigned interest in everything he sees, and his appreciation of aspects of local life that half-Westernized government officials may scorn without quite knowing why. In one of the remote regions of Ghana, such an official, showing Abrams a partly underground village, deplored it as abysmally primitive. Abrams said, "Well, but what a marvelous way to beat the heat if you haven't got air-conditioning! And what a useful plaza the connected roofs make!"

It behooves the visiting expert, Abrams has declared, not only to be sympathetic

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and flexible but also to approach his task with some measure of humility—with some recognition of the fact that the United States and other Western nations, for all their riches, have little to brag about in regard to housing. "Housing and rational urban development," he has written in *Man's Struggle for Shelter*, "are the two great problems on which the prosperous nations can offer their poor relations little guidance."

A prime example of Abrams' approach was his roof-loan scheme, which he devised in the course of his mission to Accra and later modified to make it applicable to Bolivia, Nigeria, and other countries. Before Abrams arrived in Accra, the government there had involved itself in a project that was threatening to develop into a scandal.

In 1952, it had employed a firm of Dutch construction experts in a dual role. The firm was paid a whopping fee of \$210,000 to survey the possibilities for prefabricated housing in Ghana, and then this same firm was given a contract to supply prefabricated houses.

The whole arrangement looked to Abrams to be as impractical and inapplicable as anything could. At the time, Accra did not have a deep-water harbour. This meant that the precast-concrete walls of the houses, poured in Europe and shipped to Ghana by freighter, had to be lowered onto canoes three miles offshore and paddled through tossing breakers to the shore. Then they had to be laboriously transported to the site selected.

By 1954, when Abrams' mission arrived, this scheme had cost \$448,000 (in addition to the firm's fee for the survey),

and only sixty-four houses had been put up. The project was threatening to drain the treasury, and it was becoming obvious that at best it would not meet the country's needs, for the houses would have to rent for a larger sum than the average householder was able to pay. To the government's relief, Abrams promptly advised it to cancel its contract with the Dutch firm.

### 'Roof Loans'

The programme that Abrams devised was entirely different. His aim was to find the simplest and most natural means of housing the people, with a minimum of dislocation and expense, and try to devise a formula that would facilitate it. He noted that most of the city dwellers were fresh from tribal villages and had not yet lost their skill at building their own homes. The only elements of an adequate dwelling that they could not supply for themselves, he concluded, were roofs, windows, and doors.

He proposed, therefore, that the government set up a special fund of \$2,100,000 for what he called "roof loans." A loan of around five hundred dollars covered the cost of the roof—which might be of corrugated iron, asbestos, tile, or aluminium—and of doors, windows, and a coat of whitewash for a small house. Thus, the government was able to encourage far more housing than the prefabrication scheme had provided for, and to do so by means of a fund that was constantly being replenished as the loans were repaid; furthermore, the housing was of a type that the lowest-income groups could afford.

The roof-loan plan has won much fame among housing experts. "It is so simple, yet only someone with a flexible and original mind would have thought of it," says Ernest Weissmann, a Yugoslav architect, who was formerly the director of the Housing, Building, and Planning Branch of the United Nations. The plan has worked out extremely well so far. In Ghana, roof-loan societies, usually with between thirty and forty members apiece, have been formed in more than five hundred towns and villages, and have produced unexpected social benefits.

Members have taken to using the societies as instruments for general community development. They get together to discuss local problems and solve them—to work at improving the roads and putting up schools. Illiterate members have joined to form classes in reading and writing, because they have felt ashamed, many of them, when they have been asked to sign the paper for their roof loan and have only been able to put a thumbprint on it.

Nowhere near enough consideration, Abrams thinks, has been given to all the variations involved in the fascinating, messy business of living. "The chief thing is to give people as many options as possible," he says. "That should be the main aim of city planners—to provide a multiplicity of choices, a variety of patterns, not just the one pattern of living that the planner himself might prefer."

In some respects, Abrams has found, the most insidious ideas to combat in the developing countries are those that have been popularized by liberal Western

reformers like himself. Former colonial peoples tend to have a low resistance to liberal clichés. One such cliché—which, Abrams contends, has often had a pernicious effect on the newly urbanizing countries—is that slum clearance is always a noble cause.

In the past, Abrams himself crusaded ardently for the tearing down of slums in the United States as fast as it could be done. Now, even here, he approaches the subject more warily, weighing the benefits against a whole complex of other factors to make sure that the operation will not do more harm than good in a given situation.

In times of acute housing shortage, with a growing population and a desperate need for shelter, to demolish the buildings in which people live, no matter how poorly, only aggravates the situation. "In a housing famine, there is nothing that slum clearance can accomplish that cannot be done more efficiently by an earthquake," he has written. "The worst aspects of slum life are overcrowding and excessive shelter cost. Demolition without replacement intensifies overcrowding and increases shelter cost." Demolition should be initiated only after ample new housing has been built, never before, he argues—a point that should be obvious.

#### *Tyranny of Definitions*

Yet "slum clearance" as an idea seems to have taken on such an aura of virtue that reformers push righteously on with it, blind to the havoc they are creating in the lives of the people they think they are helping. On more than one of his

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missions, Abrams has found some such misguided slum clearance operation under way and has made it his first task to persuade the government concerned to desist. He has been heard to declare, "The only thing worse than a slum surplus is a slum shortage," meaning that in the overcrowded conditions common to many of the cities of the developing nations, any sort of home is better than no home at all.

The slum clearance concept is an example of what Abrams sometimes calls "the tyranny of definitions." The words come to seem more real than reality itself; one can look at a human situation but have no true experience of it, seeing only the label that has been defined rather arbitrarily, in purely physical terms—according to such criteria as whether a building has an inside bathroom, whether there are cracks in the walls, how many windows there are in each room, and whether the structure is in a state of dilapidation or obsolescence.

But there are also all sorts of intangibles—the convenience or attractiveness of the site, the web of acquaintanceship or kinship in the neighbourhood, the accessibility of shops, the right to have children or pets in apartments, and so on—which, in determining the quality of the residents' life, may be even more important than any physical criteria. In Abrams' opinion, the tendency to overlook these factors has been one of the major mistakes made in the housing-reform programmes of recent decades, both in the United States and abroad.

In general, Abrams urges developing countries not to try to solve their pro-

blems by building large, solid, Western-style rental housing projects. His basic recommendation in many countries is that the government put up, in large numbers and as quickly as possible, some form of minimum unit—a "core house", he calls it—which the inhabitants can improve in time, as they will. The nature of the core house will vary from country to country, depending on the climate and on the skills and materials available.

### *Owning Vs. Renting*

He favours home ownership, rather than rental housing, for the underdeveloped countries. He has come around rather late in life to recognizing the desirability of home ownership. During the thirties and forties, he was skeptical about the wave of home buying that swept the United States with the aid of Federal Housing Administration financing—the small-down-payment, long-term loans that created most of the new suburbs.

He feared a wave of foreclosures might occur if the United States economy slumped into a deflationary trough. "The F.H.A. is a device for transforming a psychic equity into a vested illusion," he used to proclaim. But now he recognizes that even illusions may have their value, if they are what the human spirit demands.

However, though Abrams now favours home ownership, he deplores the practice by F.H.A. officials in the past of accepting the prevailing patterns of racial segregation, which fostered the proliferation of all-white suburbs throughout

the United States. Abrams has lambasted these policies in an angry but effective book called *Forbidden Neighbours*.

All his life he has fought against racial discrimination, and during the administration of Averell Harriman as Governor of New York State, Abrams was chairman of the New York State Commission

Against Discrimination. U.N. officials say that Abrams' reputation as a fighter against racial discrimination has been helpful on his overseas missions. In countries apt to be sensitive about the question of colour he is accorded a kind of trust and confidence that the usual visiting technical expert seldom gets.

In 1953, just before Abrams began going on U.N. missions, he prepared, at the U.N.'s behest, a volume called *Urban Land Problems and Policies*, which was the first analysis of this complex subject on a worldwide scale. Although in the numerous advisory missions he has undertaken to such countries as Kenya, Bolivia, the Philippines, Jamaica, and Nigeria, among others, he has been called on to deal with a wide variety of problems, he has discovered that there are some fundamental factors common to all.

#### *The Squatter Problem*

One such is the squatter problem, which he first gave advice on when he went on a mission to Pakistan in 1957. Squatters, he has found, are a vexatious and politically touchy matter in nearly all the cities of the developing world. Everywhere, armies of the homeless are invading vacant land, throwing up shack-towns overnight, and defying efforts to

remove them. Theirs is, in Abrams' phrase, "the trespass of desperation." Squatters pose an especially serious problem for a developing country because their actions appear to threaten the duly constituted authority on which the state rests.

Throughout the underdeveloped world, their numbers are staggering. In Karachi, at the time of Abrams' visit, squatters made up about thirty per cent of the city's population, most of them being Muslim refugees displaced by the partition of India. Today, in Ankara, Turkey, squatters are estimated to constitute almost fifty per cent of the population; in wealthy Caracas, Venezuela, whose streets are lined with glassy new skyscrapers, squatters number possibly as many as 400,000 out of a total population of 1,550,000, and their flimsy shacks crowd together on the city's hillsides; in Lima, Peru, the number of squatters is estimated at nearly half a million.

The Peruvians have developed squatting into something of a fine art. Squatter groups there have been known to hire a surveyor to lay out sites on the territory they intend to invade. "Some of the Peruvian settlements," wrote Abrams in a recent study he prepared for the United States Agency for International Development, "show the hand of the skilled amateur who might have had a good future as a city planner."

The land that squatters grab is often extremely valuable. It may be in the very heart of the city, or on the grounds of the nation's capitol, or along the landscaped edges of highways, or on property owned by the rich. Yet squatters have sometimes shown themselves to be scrupu-

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pulous—at least by their own standard of social priorities—about what land they seize.

They seldom, for instance, move in on tracts set aside for schools or hospitals, though they have no qualms about putting up their shacks near the glossiest hotels and mansions. In Caracas, huge modern housing projects designed in the International Style by the nation's leading architect, Carlos Raúl Villanueva, were erected to house the hordes of rural migrants crowding into the city. Many of these countryfolk immediately sublet their new apartments and built shacks for themselves on the project grounds, because they felt more comfortable living where they could keep a goat or a few chickens. By now such shacks, jammed together, cover much of the space between the modern buildings.

Because the squatters are so numerous and because their desperate need for shelter is understandable, if not acceptable, the governments of the countries concerned have been generally hesitant to dislodge them by force. Yet because these governments have also not wished to appear to ratify the squatters' illicit tenancy, they have been equally reluctant, on the whole, to provide the squatters with water, electricity, and sewerage—not to mention neighbourhood schools and other services. The result is that most of the squatter shantytowns are festering health menaces.

### *Firmness and Sympathy*

Abrams' recommendations for coping with the squatter problem are detailed and complex, for there is no single

solution to this problem. His Pakistan report proposed some fourteen steps that might be taken to ease the situation. His more recent report for the A.I.D. contains modifications of these suggestions as a rough guide for countries afflicted with squatters. In general, his programme calls for a delicate balance between firmness and sympathy, combined with an intensive effort to alleviate housing shortages and an intelligent and socially conscious programme of urban land reform.

He has advised the governments of some countries to set land aside for squatters and even to erect "Squatters Welcome" signs on it. An approach along the lines that he advocates is being attempted, with some degree of success, in the new Venezuelan industrial community called Ciudad Guayana, where a squatter invasion threatened all the government's careful planning.

Abrams believes that if appropriate land is made available, if the site plan is properly laid out with ample space between plots, if necessary services are furnished, and if the squatters are given an opportunity to buy their own plots eventually (as most of them want to do), then in due time they will improve their dwellings, ultimately converting their colonies into decent neighbourhoods. He has seen this happen to certain older colonies, including those in Ankara and Lahore. Where squatters have had reason to believe that their tenure is secure, they have sooner or later erected substantial multi-storey buildings of brick or masonry.

One day in 1958, Abrams took a walk through a squatter colony in the Philip-

pine city of Davao, in the course of which he noticed doctors' and lawyers' shingles on some of the houses, and one "Maid Wanted" sign as well.

Though the Davao squatters had not hesitated to break the law when it came to seizing land, they seemed to be law-abiding otherwise; for one thing, they had scrupulously observed a local ordinance requiring the numbering of all houses. Squatting, then, is not to be understood as a totally lamentable phenomenon, Abrams says. In some respects, he believes, the squatter enterprise is probably the most significant form of home-building taking place in the world today.

#### *Fomenter of Reform*

In Puerto Rico, to which one of Abrams' missions took him in 1959, his chief concern was the working out of a relatively inexpensive form of financing for the government housing programme. In Singapore, in 1963, he told the government how to revise its tax policy so as to stimulate, rather than discourage, private building. In Nigeria, to which he went in 1962, and which was then one of the countries engaged in a well-intentioned but misguided slum-clearance scheme, he recommended a programme to conserve and improve the

the existing properties, with the government providing loans to help the owners them in shape. In Ireland, in 1960, he drew up a planning-and-development programme and suggested various measures which are now being put into effect to revitalize various urban areas, including Dublin's declining downtown section.

The United Nations has a long list of countries to which it wants to send Abrams when he has the time. As a U.N. adviser, he is considered *sui generis*.

"The impact that Abrams' missions make has amazed us," Weissmann has said. "He sees housing as part of the whole social, political, and economic picture. This alone makes him more valuable than any other specialist I know. But, leaving aside the technical schemes he offers, his very personality has a powerful effect. Twenty-four hours after he arrives in a country, housing suddenly becomes a front-page topic. Somehow he makes the leaders aware of the importance of problems they had been taking for granted or else had considered hopeless. He shows them possible solutions that are right under their noses, and he convinces them that they have to drop everything else and get going on the solution right then and there. Wherever he goes, he foments reform."

# THE IDEA OF AN ART MUSEUM

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SHERMAN E. LEE

*The Cleveland (Ohio) Museum of Art is one of America's outstanding museums. In the following article Dr. Lee, its Director since 1958, states his concept of the functions of art museums and in the process takes issue with other experts.*

*I am not overfond of museums. Many of them are admirable, none are delightful. Delight has little to do with the principles of classification, conservation, and public utility, clear and reasonable though these may be.*

PAUL VALERY's words are, on the whole, just; they recognize that the art museum is with us, that it has a *raison d'être*, that it can be admirable, that a major gift of art is delight. I could not ask for more.

Modern usage of the term "art museum" seems to me a blanket covering a

multitude of huddled shapes—some vague, others with a more definite topography, all overlaid with fuzzy rationalizations.

In one city, art museum may really mean community art centre, an institution dedicated to participation in the arts. The arts, in this case, might be an ill-defined complex ranging in activity from puppets and modelling in clay to painting (as distinct from paintings) and the performing arts.

Another city may envision an art museum as a hall of temporary exhibitions, a mirror of the available arts of the day—Picasso and Wyeth, creative photography and good design. This pragmatic

acceptance of the art museum as a "good thing," this often frantic activity, hardly provides the proper environment for observation, thought, and choice of direction.

### *The Development of Art Museums*

The evaluation of the historic position of the art museum in our modern society is often lost in the shuffle of doing; or, worse, deliberately avoided in the daily pressures of economic necessity and the peripheral demands of various segments of society that use art for their own, not always unselfish, purposes. In view of this confusion and despite the temptation to "let one thousand flowers bloom," I should like to examine the idea of an art museum.

The word "museum," coming from a Greek word meaning a place connected with the Muses, and hence with the arts, gives comfort to the advocates of multiplicity. But the word "art" gives us pause. Originally connoting skill—the art of painting, the art of war—the word came to encompass the products of skill and, more importantly, of visual imagination.

Later still, just before and during the Renaissance, art was construed to apply especially to painting and sculpture, to a higher, finer art than that produced merely by skill. (Such a hierarchy had already been anticipated by the Chinese in their escalating classification of painters into skilful, wonderful, and divine; and in their castigation of the lowly artisan, including the sculptor.)

From this particular development arose the concept of the art gallery as a museum of pictures alone, and of the

museum of fine arts, for painting and sculpture. This view seemed more and more parochial as the horizon of the Occidental historian widened to include the Middle Ages, the Orient, and finally what we call primitive man, for whom easel paintings or the figure in the round were simply not accepted vehicles of artistic expression. Clearly a broader foundation for art, including both what had been called fine art and minor art, had to be established.

In the twentieth century numerous writers have stressed the formal visual values of art as underlying all its manifestations. Clive Bell's "significant form" and Berenson's "tactile values" are but two of many examples. It remained for Henri Focillon, the great medievalist, most movingly and poetically to express this view on a solid base of historical knowledge and to welcome the values largely neglected by others.

Focillon believed that the artist—whether sculptor, painter, potter, or goldsmith—thought, felt, imagined, and above all worked in forms. Words for the writer and sounds for the musician, but forms for the artist.

Let us return to the Western museum before 1900. Begun in the sixteenth century as a *Wunderkammer* in the North or an *Antiquarium* or *Galleria* in the South; it developed, for example, into the National Gallery of London, for pictures only, and the Louvre, a general museum of art and what were called antiquities. But London and Paris were, with other centres, dedicated to the preservation and display of worthy art of the past. The museums were used by educators as sources; for original experience before

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original works of art, for schooling in technique, for the study of art history or iconology.

It was the Victoria and Albert, founded by the Prince Consort as a museum to further the industries and crafts of England, that first fully embodied the concept of the museum as an educational institution with the works themselves as a *means* of public education. The concept was particularly amenable to the rising American sense of democratic education, and by the mid-twentieth century the art museum has come to flourish as a centre of art education for the community.

Since the second world war this use of works of art as a means of achieving the good life has often been assumed to be the primary function of the art museum. Indeed, the educational programmes of our museums have been much admired by some foreign visitors and their precepts carried back to the Old World—not, by any means, to meet with wholehearted acceptance.

### *At Odds on Philosophy*

Today we are confronted with two radically differing and currently irreconcilable museum philosophies. One is summarized with appalling simplicity by Theodore Low in his wartime study, *The Museum As a Social Instrument*: "In short, they [men today] recognize that the *only real* justification for the existence of a museum lies in its degree of usefulness to society as a whole...."

We have all seen this museum before; at the end of its long and narrow gallery hangs an enormous canvas covered with bulging muscles and heroically stern eyes.

The title is interchangeable: "The Party," "The Heroic Working Class," or "The Master Race."

A more subtle variation of this concept, derived from Alexander Dorner, is given by Samuel Cauman in *The Living Museum* (1958). Cauman sees the art museum as an instrument of evolution "to assist in the transformation of society by the creative energies of our moment in time."

This echo of the Bauhaus, a proper one for a school or institute, continues: "The living museum holds our past and present together, not by imposing the past upon the present, but by showing its relation to the present. The new movements are seen as the leading edge of change; older works are seen as traces of the transforming process of the other days."

Opposed to what they consider a "mythology" of ancient art, Dorner and Cauman wish to replace myth with science. As science progresses, new discoveries, new theories *supersede* old ones; today's science is condemned to obsolescence. And so it is, they say, with art.

The second theory, by no means a new and progressive one, was summarized in 1918 by Benjamin Ives Gilman in his *Museum Ideals of Purpose and Method*. (It is not without grim significance that he is not mentioned by Cauman, nor is the book listed in Low's bibliography.) Gilman's formula is quite plainly summarized: "While museums of other kinds are at bottom educational institutions, a museum of fine art is not didactic but aesthetic in primary purpose...." ...the "conception of an art museum is not that of an educational institution having art for its

teaching material, but that of an artistic institution with educational uses and demands."

Such a formulation recognizes that art and science are neither antagonistic nor at all the same thing. It recognizes that progress or evolution in science is paralleled by progress or evolution in the techniques or means of organizing works of art. However, as art—as meaning in form—its qualities may change, but Sung painting, Phidias, or Gislebertus are *not* superseded and obsolete.

I follow Gilman. The art museum has three major functions—preservation, exhibition, research and education. These are the assigned roles of the art museum in modern society. To this, except for a few fortunate institutions, is added the role of an indigent, marginal suitor for private or public funds.

If the art museum is to be a force, whether an obvious or a subtle one, it must take a lesson from the art of war: the numerically inferior army does not disperse its limited powers, but by husbanding its resources and concentrating its blows makes its presence felt. And this presence is a visual one, not so much supported as confused by the simultaneous use of the sounds of Muzak or the words of Acoustiguide.

It is poetic justice that the rise of the art museum parallels that of industrialization. One can almost conceive of the art museum as a guilt-offering by industrial society, a place to preserve what is threatened with destruction. The first assigned function of the art museum is to preserve; its curators are keepers. And it is precisely because this preservation function may be an unconscious expression of

guilt for the destruction of art that this function is nearer to the truth of the museum than the more conscious justifications of education, encouragement of the arts, and research.

These are all worthy, of course, but certainly they are secondary. Preservation is the basic need both for the present and for posterity. One cannot have the remotest idea of what Rembrandt is all about unless one can see a Rembrandt painting in reasonably good condition—in brief, well preserved.

Once we admit the precedence of preservation, we are largely committed to the past. The argument that this concept of the museum is unworthy of "the living present" is the argument of those who are anti-historical, who fancy opinion over tradition and historically constructed taste, of fashion over style, of news over history. If man is the sum of his past and thinks he makes his present preferable to his past, then it is just the past that needs preserving.

But preserve what? In an art museum, art: those products of the visual imagination that the history of taste has established as art—whether a Chinese painting or a Vincennes porcelain. We have our exalted and selective idea of the art of the past precisely because we see it filtered through the taste of generations of connoisseurs.

Anyone familiar with the dregs of the art market or of the storage rooms of old repositories knows how dreary the non-art past can be. As Hume noted in *On the Standard of Taste*, "The same Homer, who pleased at Athens and Rome two thousand years ago, is still admired at Paris and London. All the changes of

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climate, government, religion, and language have not been able to obscure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general."

We preserve art by acquisition and selection, by rejection and deletion, by science and by taste. I cannot here go into the complex politics of acquisition by purchase or by gift. One aspect of preservation, however, may be of special significance, that of conservation, or more rudely, the care, cleaning, and restoration of works of art. This involves a distinction between the primary function of an art museum—the preservation of the artist's image—and the secondary consideration of the work of art as a physical object in the world of things.

### *No Halfway Measures*

A continuing and bitter controversy over the cleaning of pictures in the National Gallery in London has pointed up the problem. (I am not concerned here with controversies about particular pictures.) The more articulate complainers about "cleaned" pictures cite the importance of the painting as image, while the defenders build their defence about the painting as a physical thing.

But no painting today is the thing it was originally. It changes from year to year, decade to decade, in itself. The carmines are often fugitive, the greens blacken, glazes of thin colour are abraded by too assiduous butlers.

It is pointless to reconstitute a painting or preserve it in a present falsity. As an image, not a thing, it can never be

quite the image it was at its origin, but, considered as a visual image rather than as a combination of chemicals, it can be a work of art. The preservation of the image can only be achieved by a combination of taste, respect, and sympathy with physical or chemical science. What must be left on the canvas is not just the pigments, each in its best present condition, but a moving and unified work of art.

Such a crucial and subtle problem is a vital concern of a true art museum. It cannot be solved by hasty or dilatory gestures sandwiched between frenetic peripheral activities.

The works preserved should be exhibited. They were made for the delectation of a beholder. Again, there can be no halfway measures for the art museum. Exhibition means that the individual work may be seen in a sympathetic environment and that by the juxtaposition of numerous works of art, one may evaluate, discern, and compare.

In the development of taste, comparison is the imperative means. Special exhibitions of works borrowed from afar and exposed to injury by travel or change of environment are justifiable only if the comparisons they allow are meaningful and contribute to more than local knowledge. The exhibition as theatre, in which defenseless pictures become part of a jazzed-up dumb show, the exhibition a la mode, the exhibition of art as a history of things, or the documentation of history by an unselective juxtaposition of inferior and superior works of art—all are confusions of the value of works of art.

And what of contemporary art, the art of our own generation? Where does it fit into this idea of an art *museum*,

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rather than an art *centre* or *institute*?

In a sense—and not in any way a derogatory one—contemporary art has not yet been evaluated by taste. As we all know from reading newspapers or art-news magazines, it is very much of the marketplace. Some publications even carry a page of current quotations in the art “bourse.” We would all love to be right in such a marketplace. But immediate judgments are hardly necessary since contemporary works are not usually in grave danger of destruction, and the support of the contemporary artist should come from the healthy patronage of his contemporaries.

The art museum must acquire and show, within reason, works of contemporary art. Special exhibitions are a legitimate function of the art museum today, a function previously performed by salons, academies, and special splinter-groups.

But, again, the exercise of selective judgment is essential. The museum should have the courage to represent an honorably chosen position and to judge. Such an attitude is commonly accepted in literary and musical criticism. If art museums do not show all the works of art that ever existed—*i.e.*, history rather than taste—they would be even more wrong to show what is news, that is, merely report on the current state of all art activity.

The idea of an art museum may not be exciting in the current usage of that word. But it is one that remains true to the idea of art as images worth preserving. It makes of the museum a living source of original visual knowledge, available to all. It accepts the occasional need for dilution, but it rejects adulteration. And it ensures, so long as it is possible of preservation, that the still living art of the immediate and distant past will remain visible.

# THE MEANING OF THE NEW MUSIC

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ROBERT MIDDLETON

*The following article is intended for the reader who has some acquaintance with Western music and finds the serious contemporary music of America bewildering. The author, a composer and professor of music, traces the evolving concerns of Western composers of music since the 17th century, describes the problems of the composer—and listener—today, and urges a new approach to the education of laymen to rear up a generation taught how to compose music rather than to listen to it. Dr. Middleton's four-act opera "Command Performance" was produced by the Boston Opera Group in 1961. His book, "Harmony in Modern Counterpart," appeared in 1967.*

ELECTRONIC MUSIC, computer music, *musique concrete*, synthesizer music, totally serialized music and its opposite aleatoric or chance music—these recent developments in music are a mystery to most listeners and to many professional musicians as well.

The attempt to find some meaning to this "new music" through technical analysis does not suffice. If we are not to resent the very presence of this music, and many do, we must go beyond technical questions in the search for some logical explanation of these innovations.

Present-day studies in the history of human endeavours indicate that evolu-

tionary development is an ever-accelerating process. In many fields, a marked acceleration begins around 1800, and rapid change characterizes the twentieth century, the past two decades in particular. If music is similar to other human endeavours, its history should show a similar pattern.

If we were to interpret the development of music not, as is usual, in cycles of more or less equal length, or as continuous steady growth, but as an ever-accelerating evolutionary process with stylistic periods of ever-decreasing length, the seemingly incomprehensible music of the present might become understandable.

In *The Future of Man* (Harper and Row, 1964) Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

makes some interesting observations about the present which can be said to have bearing on recent music. He calls attention to "the increasing degree in which present-day thought and activity are influenced by the passion for discovery; the progressive replacement of the workshop by the laboratory, of production by research, of the desire for well-being by the desire for *more-being*...the growing compulsion to act, to produce, to think collectively which...is preparing not to mechanize and submerge us, but to raise us by way of increasing complexity, to a higher awareness of our own personality...the research workers no longer work in isolation but in teams...the movement is accelerating to the point where we must be blind not to see in it an essential trend in human affairs. Research, which only yesterday was a luxury pursuit, is in the process of becoming a major, indeed the principal function of humanity. As in the case of all the organisms preceding it, but on an immense scale, humanity is in the process of 'cerebralising' itself."

Three questions come to mind as a consequence of reading these observations. Is music becoming discovery and research, or "more-being," and no longer production and well-being? Is music becoming increasingly complex and collectively reflective, and no longer expressive of the individual personality? Is music "cerebralising" itself? The answers to these questions might clarify the meaning of the "new music."

#### *Research into Music's 'Being'*

Prior to the late eighteenth century, or

prior to Romanticism and its eighteenth-century precursors, music concerned itself mainly with problems of production, or research into music's "being." Forms and structures were developed, enlarged, and subtly refined. A harmonic system was formulated. Counter-point, rhythmic organization, notation, and instrumental techniques were invented, perfected, and distributed. The crucial inventions or ideas involved techniques of music's "being."

It seems significant that this was an age when music was written largely for private or semi-private performance. The production was aimed at giving performers plenty of music to play or sing, or else how do we account for the vast quantities of madrigals, trio-sonatas, motets, and concertos?

Since the evolutionary process was moving at a leisurely pace, there was time for composers to repeat their experiments again and again with unchanging materials, testing, retesting, and proving already known conclusions. Each composer could be his own workshop as well as his own laboratory. Both involved highly skilled hand-workmanship, and the products of the two were similar (except in rare cases such as the Neapolitan composer Don Carlo Gesualdo, whose advanced, speculative madrigals published in 1611 are in contrast to his earlier conservative compositions).

This growth of craft and refinement within a familiar idiom resulted in many magnificent creations, but by the end of the eighteenth century, problems of production in music were more or less solved. Music's "being" was researched to its logical conclusion.

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### *Research into Music's 'Well-Being'*

Just as the automobile could not have been invented until numerous problems of production had been solved—rubber, gasoline, steel, and so forth—so it seems that problems of production in music had to be solved before the next step could be taken—the research into music's "well-being," or into the special selection and balance of elements which gives each piece its individual nuance and expressive quality.

Research into the expressive quality of music was the concern of the Romantic period, beginning roughly with Mozart and ending with "Wozzeck" of Alban Berg. (Or start with Monteverdi, if it makes you happier. Expressive speculation is found in his works, and occasionally in the works of his sixteenth-century predecessors).

In the nineteenth century the pace of development accelerates. Schumann experiments with expressive qualities of rhythm, both driving and slackening. Liszt researches the expressive qualities of an improvisatory style, or lack of meter. Wagner researches the expressive qualities of harmony. Where the music itself cannot clarify the expressive intent, or begins to wander aimlessly, words are called on to help—it is an age of descriptive titles, elaborate markings of expression and nuance, the art song, the tone poem, and literary association. Signs that an evolutionary process is accelerating begin to appear.

In contrast to previous periods where composers concentrated on developing technique and subtlety within a familiar style, composers begin to proceed from

one style to another, as Beethoven and Verdi did. Unable to adjust to new developments, they may stop writing music, as Rossini did. They find it less possible to be their own workshops to the extent that their predecessors did, witness the disappointing late works of Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Strauss. They are not as prolific. The individual quota of symphonies, for example, falls from 105 (Haydn) to 50 (Mozart) to 9 (Beethoven) to 4 (Brahms). The quota of string quartets falls from 83 (Haydn) to 23 (Mozart) to 16 (Beethoven) to 6 (Mendelssohn) to 3 (Brahms).

Surely this is not because music has become so much more difficult to write, but because the completion of the research into music's "well-being," or its nuance and expressiveness, is taking less time than the research into its "being," in keeping with the inevitable trend of evolutionary events, which cause their own acceleration by their own nature. It also seems significant that this period of musical well-being saw the golden age of the concert, of grand opera, of the large symphony orchestra, of the virtuoso performer, of the contented listener.

### *Research into Music's 'More-Being'*

This growth of expressive power and individual nuance resulted in magnificent creations, but by the end of the first World War, problems of musical expression were more or less solved. The composition of "Wozzeck" a few years later brought this research to a close. The expressive content of music had been tested, retested, and proved. Music's "well-being" was researched to its logical conclusion.

With the arrival of the twentieth century a speed-up in laboratory activity begins. Debussy explores non-functional harmony, liberating it for those who come after him; Stravinsky explores rhythm; Bartok explores intervallic relationships and motives; Hindemith experiments with lines and patterns for their own sake. As in other fields of human endeavour, more advanced means for research develop. Just as expanded microscopes probed deeper into biological processes, so the invention of the twelve-tone system opened hitherto unprobed areas to musical exploration.

It was a mode of thought which offered a far more efficient and systematic method for harmonic research than had been previously available.

#### *A Lull in the Evolutionary Process*

After this period of vigorous experiment, a period when the laboratory was important, there occurs a period which seems to run counter to the general evolutionary trend. For about twenty-five years during the thirties and forties, music seemed to "settle down." Composers became increasingly conservative, consolidating and refining their styles (some by choice, others at the order of their governments) and once again concerned themselves with "being" and "well-being." Composers wistfully turned backward glances to earlier, nicer periods—neo-classicism, neo-baroque, neo-folk, neo-primitive—backward glances to periods that had been concerned with production and well-being.

It is significant that during this period the composers once again became atten-

tive to audience reaction and performance problems—we find *Gebrauchsmusik*, Music for Use, People's Music, the folk revival, and so forth, and a number of works written during this period have more popular appeal than earlier speculative ones.

It is obvious now, but it was not obvious at the time, that this was a misleading lull in the evolutionary process, and not the development of a satisfying period of common practice as many had hoped.

What was happening during these years? They were years of severe economic depression, restrictive dictatorial establishments, war, and recovery from war. It was a period of halt to nearly all progress because of depression, halt to new inventions not essential to war and winning of war, and halt to the spread of new ideas because of restrictive establishments.

Extra energy and materials were not available to expend in non-essential speculation and research; and as a result, the period concerned itself with production and well-being, as past periods had done. Composers returned to the workshop, repeating and refining the experiments of production and well-being they had already made, as composers of the past had been able to do, and in some cases, redoing their earlier works to make them more accessible.

The period also shows powerful establishments at work halting the spread of a dangerous new idea. It would seem logical to assume that the idea of the musical staff must have been greeted with derision by the musical establishment of its time. In our own time, knowledge of the

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twelve-tone system, or serial techniques, research tools of importance, was forbidden in some areas, scarcely mentioned in others, and ridiculed in most. The Three "A's," Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton von Webern, were required to do their research in isolation.

### *A Return to 'More-Being'*

And so, just when Stravinsky and Bartok and Prokofiev were beginning to write really pleasant music, everything went wrong again! Once the second World War was over, we suddenly were confronted, for a *second* time in our century, with "new music." New materials, new media, new research tools (such as the computer) could not be ignored. The stability, the "settling down" gave way in a surge of activity. The false lull in twentieth-century musical evolution was over.

During the past decade, serious composition has become almost entirely research in new materials and techniques. The research has proceeded rapidly. Just as the average person cannot comprehend developments in science, so the average person finds it difficult to comprehend recent developments in music.

Music has always had its intellectual games—hidden canons, notational puzzles, mirror writing, and so forth—but hardly to the world-wide extent as at present. No one is quite certain what the final result of the process will be, just as no one knows exactly what may be found on the moon. The justification is perhaps none other than the justification of the research for its own sake. But the process is a familiar part of an evolutionary move-

ment, made difficult for us because changes occur with greater rapidity than they did previously.

Having discussed these aspects of the past, and their bearing on the present, an affirmative answer to the three questions posed earlier seems logical. Music is becoming discovery and research, or "more-being," and no longer production and well-being. Music is becoming increasingly complex and collectively reflective and no longer expressive of the individual personality. Music is "cerebralising" itself.

The "new music" does not concern itself with "being," private performance, or the workshop. Music's hands, ears, eyes, and feet are already well-organized. The "new music" does not concern itself with "well-being," audience appeal, or individual expressiveness. Music's heart and senses are already well-developed. The "new music" concerns itself with mind and reflection, with a passion for speculation and experiment. Ever more abstract, ever more a kind of collective thought, music's *brain* is evolving.

### *The Contemporary Composer Must Choose*

What is the composer to do in this new world? First of all he will have to choose between the laboratory and the workshop or factory. In the past, new tools for research did not emerge too rapidly; and strong establishments, aided by ineffective means of communication and distribution, prevented new ideas from spreading too easily. A composer could reasonably expect to continue, ordinarily through his lifetime, working

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with comparatively unchanging materials. This must surely account for the quantity of music turned out by composers of the past—Vivaldi's four hundred concerti, Scarlatti's seventy operas, Haydn's one hundred and five symphonies, Bach's two hundred cantatas, and so forth.

Just as the products of the science laboratory are seized upon and put into production in the factory, so are the products of the musical laboratory. The first impact of the factory was seen in things that were needed—furniture, clothing, and china, for example. The impact was not noticeable in things that were not essential, such as sculpture, painting, or music. Now, however, the hand of the factory is felt in music, too. The musical factory turns out mentally cheaper imitations of the real thing. The composers of the past have provided the moulds for "being," all shapes and sizes and lengths.

The results of the nineteenth-century expressive revolution are well known to all, and "well-being" can be poured into the factory product just like calcium propionate is added to bread. Dance music, new folk music, movie music, television music, background music—anything for which there is a popular demand—will not be in short supply.

In the past the product of the laboratory and the product of the factory were somewhat similar, since highly skilled hand work was used in both. Now, however, the difference between the two is more obvious. It is one of the aims of "new music" to separate itself from the factory, by being much too complex and uncomfortably abstract. The gap between music from the laboratory and that from the factory will become increasingly diffi-

cult to bridge, just as the gap between scientific knowledge and popular understanding is hard to bridge. But there will be no respectable middle ground between the two worlds.

### *Factory Composer Vs. Laboratory Composer*

As a result, the factory will assume an importance beyond its basic worth. The factory will turn out more palatable products than the laboratory, but its cleverly labelled and attractively packaged products, somewhat on the order of paper plates, will be disposable, useful mainly as background music to other activities. If the great achievements of history were not so much with us, these factory products might very well pass as being of some importance, but comparison with the fine products of the past makes their lack of quality only too obvious. And there is no danger that history will disappear.

On the other hand, the laboratory composer will be judged by the interest of his basic hypothesis or speculation, and by the way his experiments prove the hypothesis he poses. His research will be of high quality if it has carried the idea to a logical conclusion within the bounds of the material available. Since the composer must accept the fact that the bounds of the material may expand tomorrow, dramatic changes of style will be expected rather than occasional.

### *The Serious Contemporary Composer*

Far from turning out quantity, a composer will probably produce less, for mere

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production of music is no longer of importance. There is already more music than can be performed or listened to in a lifetime. Neither performers nor audiences have any real need for new music other than that produced by the factory.

This being the case, a primary activity of the serious composer is to be firm about discarding materials that are irrelevant or repetitive and to question lapses into "well-being." His new music will be judged on the quality of its speculation and discovery, on its abstract, intellectual quality, on its *brain*.

The composer will look for problems to be solved and for ways to solve them. For experience, he may redo an experiment done by others, he may rework a problem if his first solution has not been a success, and he might even be permitted to repeat an experiment for the sheer pleasure. In general, however, as in other fields, a completed piece of research will not need to be redone.

The composer will have to be more mechanically-minded and mathematically-inclined than in the past. Music will continue to involve mathematics, as it has for some time. The computer will surely play an increasing role, for it can make experiments beyond the speed of human ability. New methods of recording, broadcasting, televising, and synthesizing will multiply the possibilities for research and experimentation. As yet unknown machines and instruments will develop. Eventually, the composer will have at his disposal machines which will make him less dependent on the intensively trained performer.

The composer of "new music" will not need to be a performer himself, and may

not even need to be, in the accepted sense of the word, musical. Much of the "new music" is intelligible mainly to other composers, just as much scientific research is intelligible mainly to other scientists. But just as this scientific activity seems to bring about its own multiplication, so does musical research seem to bring about an increase in the number of composers or what Roger Sessions refers to as the "compositorial explosion."

Such an increase in the number of composers throughout the world, and the rapidity with which the results of their research become common property, seem to indicate the development of a kind of collective thought and action. And there is already discernible a compulsion on the part of more and more persons to join in this activity. No longer filled with inexplicable phenomena such as "art," "genius," and "inspiration," and devoid of all the old inhibiting theoretical rules, the making of music is less mysterious, less individualistic, less unique, and is more of a collective intellectual activity.

Significant new musical activity may take place in actual laboratories, just as scientific research does. A group of performers, composers, mathematicians, and aestheticians may cooperate in creating new techniques. Composition may become more of a group activity, rather than an individual creation, since it will be difficult for an individual to have access to the expensive mechanical equipment needed for the creation of some of the new music. This type of organization has already begun; witness the "laboratories" for new music at the University of Chicago and the University of Buffalo, the electronics studios at Princeton,

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Columbia, and abroad.

New works which require a great deal of true improvisation on the part of the players (not variations on a theme, as found in traditional jazz, or activation of harmonies as found in Baroque music) are a sort of collective reflection, or collective composition.

### *What of the Listener and Performer?*

And finally, is there a role for the listener, for the performer, in these new developments? As musical thinking and musical training are presently organized, the answer would seem to be "not much or almost none at all." The "new music" of the past decade is not written for the pleasure of performers, nor for the pleasure of listeners, but for the pleasure of composers. It is not musical activity for its own sake, nor musical feeling for its own sake, but musical thinking for its own sake. It must be admitted that some of the "new music" is more pleasant to think about and to study than it is to hear or play.

But it is possible that musical life and musical thinking are being reorganized without our quite realizing it. The social circumstances of music may be changing. There seems to be dissatisfaction with music as an exercise, or as a kind of drug. There is an increasing desire to be more active in the creation of music with living materials.

In the past, the well-educated, cultivated person was expected to perform, to consume musical products. Then the cultivated, well-educated person was expected to be an intelligent listener, an absorber of musical products, since per-

forming had become too difficult. Now that listening has become too difficult, emphasis must be placed on giving more people the techniques and training necessary to become musical *thinkers*, to enjoy abstract musical ideas for their own sake, to join in the process of discovery and cerebralisation. In other words, the cultivated, well-educated person must now be taught to compose.

### *A New Education in Music*

Instead of training a selected few to become composers, an effort should be made to reach much sooner that larger group whose present energies are channelled almost entirely into performing or listening. Our theories, our curriculums have been devoted largely to instruction in "being" and "well-being." Now we must offer training which enables the student to compose, to think in abstract musical concepts, like composers are thinking. We must offer instruction in "more-being."

To do this we first need a new theory, just as a new math was needed; for traditional theory, while perhaps useful in teaching performance and music history, is a dead language as far as composition is concerned. We must pay heed to Stravinsky when he suggests in his *Autobiography* that "it would be wiser to begin the education of a pupil by first giving him a knowledge of what is, and only then tracing history backward step by step to what has been."

Once some new theory is organized, or even call it "non-theory" if you wish, we must think of developing new uses for the products of this research, new musical

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institutions, clubs, special halls, societies, laboratories—who knows what—where the activity can be shared by those who understand it, along the lines of the recording society, the professional journal, or the University Press. (It is interesting to note here that two new journals concerned with new music have just been announced in the past months.)

These new institutions would take the place of traditional means of distribution. Concert halls and opera houses would then be on the order of museums, for there is no danger that the great works of the past will disappear. But in this atmosphere, the "new music" seems out of place. It does not seem right, for example, to sit and listen to electronic devices in a concert hall. The "new music" needs new social circumstances—it needs some new combination of or relationship between performing, creating, and listening, a new relationship where the creating will be the most important.

Those who are afraid that this will ruin music entirely are too apprehensive. The human mind is very capable of abstract thought, and it would seem that everywhere people are asking for some living means to exercise their brains. A deeper, completely contemporaneous commitment to the creative aspect of music would lead to a higher awareness of music itself, whether new or old. And the facts of evolution would seem to show that the solution of one problem does not kill, but merely peels off the top layer of

dry skin, revealing hidden assets undreamed of.

If the "new music" can be considered a part of an evolutionary process, what is happening today must by its very nature have some function which is somehow superior to the past. If we glance at a few of the aims of the "new music" which disturb so many listeners and performers, we may find some clues.

The purpose in methodically discarding all the restrictive rules and regulations of composition, in discarding the dependence on expressive qualities (noticeable in the deliberate distortion of meaningful words in so many new vocal works, or in the choice of nonsense for texts), in the quest for greater precision in notation (or in the co-existing search for greater *imprecision*)—what can all this signify but a clearing away of those mysterious, phenomenal, awesome, inhibiting, quasi-religious factors which have kept so many people at such a distance from the actual composition of music.

Music should no longer be written for us, nor with us in mind, but by us. Active participation in the pleasure and challenge of musical speculation and discovery for its own sake should be increased. A movement away from "being" and "well-being" in music to "more-being" in music would seem to be in keeping with an observable evolutionary trend. And the "new music" is comprehensible and has meaning if it is considered basic research into all aspects of such a movement.

# MODERN LITERATURE AND A SET OF ASSUMPTIONS

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KEITH FORT

*The following article was written when Mr. Fort was assistant professor of English at Georgetown University. It presents an interesting dissent from some major assumptions which dominate contemporary American literature and literary criticism.*

FOR AT LEAST A QUARTER of a century thematic analysis of contemporary literature has relied on a set of assumptions about modern life—among them the collapse of value, the breakdown of communication, the spiritual death of the mass of mankind, and the impossibility of heroic figures existing.

These themes are the conclusions of the literary giants of an earlier generation who painfully discovered them from imaginative investigations into their world. By now these conclusions have been adopted as truths about reality. While society has changed, the literary community, committed to the validity of these ideas, tends to evaluate contemporary writing on the degree to which it supports these assumptions rather than on its authenticity of perception.

Not only have these assumptions been accepted as dogma in much critical

writing but more dangerously, they have become a secure point of departure for many young writers who paradoxically make the condition that there is no secure belief as a solid base upon which to ground their works. Justification of the assumption becomes for them more important than the attempt to perceive the actual world. The assumptions tend, also, to be held with equal lack of question by readers as well as by critics and writers.

Salinger, for example, has no need to prove to his readers that the mass of middle class people is dead and in need of pity because the readers who made him famous work out of the same set of assumptions about the "average" man as he does. A circle of beliefs is thus drawn around writer, critic, and reader, and within its perimeter characters, situations, and themes have hardened into stereotype. Although there is certainly some truth in these assumptions, overuse of the terms obscures the reality of the problems which they are supposed to describe.

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### *Reversal Came Gradually*

The exact moment when the proving of these assumptions became more important than the examination of reality cannot be pinpointed. This reversal came gradually and grew out of the increasing number of readers who were raised on the writings of men like Dostoevsky and Kafka and who had come to believe in the Truth of these writers' visions.

Dostoevsky had to wrench his themes out of the world. But Salinger, writing at what seems to be the decaying end of the modern imagination which Dostoevsky was so instrumental in beginning, must wrench the world to fit the themes. Even at the time when T.S. Eliot was writing his mature poetry, a mid-point between the beginning of the modern vision and its contemporary decay, the tendency to accept these themes as Truth was emerging.

These ideas have been able to slip into the minds of the intellectual community as absolutes partly because they are ostensibly so disturbing that no one is put on his guard against them. Who would take pleasure in devoting a work to proving that we all live in a Wasteland? Or, why would one like to read a work that shows him to be in a world of spiritually dead automatons?

These questions fail to recognize that any assumption is preferable to none and that these themes have been given authority by a fairly long tradition of acceptance by the intellectual community. Reader, writer, and critic are committed to a belief in the validity of the themes, and the actual content is of

secondary importance beside the fact that they are proven *right* by literature which agrees with them.

The outsiders who prophetically describe the emptiness of American life fail to recognize that they are doing so in terms which pander to the assumptions of the very people whom they hate. Saul Bellow makes Valentine Gersbach in *Herzog* into an excellent example of how the surest way to become a social lion among the intellectual upper middle class is to parrot the conclusions of existentialism which attack this very class.

If we go one step deeper towards an understanding of why these assumptions have been so readily accepted, we see that the themes are not so disturbing as they seem to be. The consciousness of the author is always contrasted to the spiritual sterility which he depicts. If a writer calls other people "dead" or "phony" a presupposition lurking behind the accusation suggests that only an alive, authentic consciousness could see the sterility of others.

The author may be present in his work either directly with a hero who is his surrogate or indirectly in the style by which he describes other people. In the former case, the hero is presented sympathetically and we see the workings of his mind. If he makes a mistake readers and critics tend to forgive him because they know the motivations for his actions. The Other is, of course, seen only from outside so that his actions appear meaningless. The questioning of the narrator of the Wasteland and the impeccable intelligence of the poet behind that narrator make us sympathetic to both. But only the surface of those who

are seen is described, and whose lives could seem anything other than empty if the relations which cause them are stripped away?

If, on the other hand, the author's personality is present only in style we are prompted to say "what a brilliant, sensitive mind to have seen so clearly the meaninglessness of the world." But in both instances the result is the same: the author who sees the deadness is outside the Wasteland. Needless to say, reader, critic, and, obviously the writer himself, identify with the superior outsider and not the inferior insider. Sartre confesses in *The Words*:

*At the age of thirty, I executed the master stroke of writing in "Nausea"—quite sincerely believe me—about the bitter unjustified existence of my fellowmen and of exonerating my own.*

He might well have added that the exoneration of the author is dependent on the condemnation of other people because without dead insiders there can be no outsiders with a sense of superiority. The more evil the thing described is, the better the describer will seem to be.

There are a number of major themes in contemporary literature which have undergone this conversion from conclusion to assumption. I have chosen to look at four.

### 1. *The Idea of the Wasteland*

Eliot writes "A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,/I had not thought death had undone so many."

In the song "Little Boxes" made famous a few years back by Pete Seeger (and, I think, a fair representative of the pole of contemporary opposed to Eliot) suburbanites are described this way:

*And the people in the houses  
All go to the university:  
And they all get put in boxes,  
Little boxes all the same.  
And there's doctors, and there's lawyers,  
And bus'ness executives:  
And they're all made out of ticky tacky,  
And they all look just the same.*

These quotations are but two of a great number of examples from contemporary literature which propose a mass of people whose death is lamented by an elected outsider. Suppose that we could know one of the dead who walk across London Bridge or one of the squares who live in suburbia. These people would immediately reveal themselves as human beings, and if we understood the reasons why they had to be on London Bridge or in suburbia, we could not so quickly make the equation of their lives to "Wasteland."

But when they are looked at from outside they can easily be dismissed with an abstraction like "dead" or "square." If an attempt were made, however, to define the reality of their deadness, the abstraction would wither away and with it the pleasure-giving belief of author and reader that they are superior.

The reality of the sterility of the insiders must, however, be substantiated in a work if the belief in the elected outsider is to be maintained. But how is this possible when an analysis of the lives of

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the dead might destroy the concept? Symbolism gives the needed illusion of objective proof.

To illustrate we can look at a few symbols of deadness from various areas of modern literature. In *The Wasteland* the typist receives her "young man carbuncular." She eats from tins, and her underclothes are hanging in her apartment. In the beginning of Hemingway's story, "Soldier's Home," it is noted that the main character attends a "Methodist college in Kansas." Seymour Glass's wife in "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" fixes her fingernails while she talks on the telephone. In *Nausea* Sartre reports that one of his villainous bourgeois has made a will. These are all facts which symbolize the spiritual failings of other people. How valid are they?

Perhaps in Eliot's work a great deal of thought and examination took place before he chose his symbols. But in the case of Salinger, and to a lesser degree Hemingway and Sartre, the authors offer little evidence to support the implicit contention of their works that these facts represent a spiritual reality.

Another way of stating this point is to say that at some point in the development of modern literature a confusion developed between symbol and meaning, and the representation no longer stood for reality but was assumed to be equal to it.

The acceptance of the symbols is possible only because the readers share the basic assumptions of the author and are therefore anxious to make the same equations. This complicity has a positive result in that it has allowed for the creation of a loosely constructed modern

tradition. A writer can, for example, through the use of such symbols, relatively easily communicate the impossibility of communication. But, as in any tradition, these conventions are meaningful only so long as readers are aware of the reality behind the symbols.

How do the explications of contemporary literature interpret them? They use terms like "spiritual sterility" and "meaninglessness." Of those who use and read these words how many have any awareness of the reality which those abstractions represent?

The reader leaves a poem or novel (or a writer completes one) feeling that he has understood because he has equated the symbol to an abstraction which he *a priori* believes is a summary of the spiritual condition of other people. He has the feeling that he has experienced a profound insight into the modern predicament, and he is pleased that he has been proven right. Yet, a person can deal with a work in this way without ever having had to think about the reality which should be behind both abstraction and symbol.

### *II. The Decline of the Hero*

Although we rarely find in modern literature a character of the stature of Oedipus or Hamlet, this does not mean that the hero has actually declined. The hero is the author, present either through a sympathetic protagonist or in style. The important question is why has this apparent decline occurred.

Those who accept the contemporary imagination on its own terms are prone to say that society (meaning the Waste-

land) does not allow men of heroic stature to exist. The attempt to blame the absence of the hero on society, as if this abstraction were real, obscures the issue because society as it appears in a work is itself the creation of the author. The more clearly an author shows that society denies to his characters any chance for heroism, the more exalted his own consciousness will be.

Hence, despite changes in society the tendency of many contemporary writers is to oversimplify its evil to continue to prove the hostility of society to greatness. Society, for example, is much more sympathetic to the outsider than it once was. Thus, for the author to maintain the illusion, satisfying to himself and to his audience, that the issue of conformist versus non-conformist is of overriding importance, the Other in the Wasteland must be stereotyped into the insensitive square.

To be heroic a character in literature must have opposition which is nearly equal to him. But where in contemporary literature do we see an author who is willing to create characters who, in a sense, argue on equal terms with their creators? Reality is controlled by style so that everything points to the validity of the author's opinions. Shakespeare and Sophocles let onto the stage, as Dostoevsky let into his novels, characters who could speak for differing views so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to know the author's position. Without this opposition within the works, the authors need not force their heroes to exert themselves.

*Franny and Zooey*, for example, would have been an entirely different

kind of book if Lane Coutell had been allowed to make an articulate and sympathetically presented explanation of why he had tried to write a good paper on Flaubert. To answer him Salinger would have had to make Franny work mentally and emotionally, and she might have approached a degree of heroism. Instead, she goes into the ladies' room and throws up.

Her act is enough to prove Lane a fool and Franny the heroine only because Salinger can count on a contract with his audience that states that "academician" is a valid symbol for emptiness. Because of this reliance on an assumption Franny is the sympathetic protagonist of the story without her having to actually do anything of value.

### III. *The Problem of Communication*

No discussion of the predicament of modern man, as it is revealed in his literature, is complete without a discussion of the problem of communication. The belief that there is a breakdown in communication forms a base from which much criticism and many new novels are written. But again I suggest that if we separate ourselves from the belief in the validity of this assumption, the problem, though real (and certainly absolute communication has always been impossible), will appear in a different light.

The critical cliches built up around this theme point towards the contention that the Other is responsible for this failure. The insensitive cannot understand the sensitive outsider. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," the

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narrator thinks:

*Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets  
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes  
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows?*

In *The Catcher in the Rye* Holden has, during the early part of the novel, been concerned with what happens in the winter to ducks which live on the pond in Central Park. He finally asks a cab driver about them:

*"Do you know, by any chance? I mean does somebody come around in a truck or something and take them away, or do they fly away by themselves—go south or something?"*

*Old Horowitz turned all the way around and looked at me. He was a very impatient-type guy. He wasn't a bad guy, though. "How the hell should I know?" he said. "How the hell should I know a stupid thing like that?"*

Prufrock's attempt at communication (whether real or imaginary) fails because the Other cannot understand him. Holden's fails for the same reason. In neither of these examples (nor in the bulk of other such episodes) is the attempt truly made to communicate because the failure is assumed before the act is attempted and reality is so structured that the pessimistic prognosis appears justified.

But again we can ask why a writer would want to prove such an assumption? So long as the belief is valid, the

spiritual reality which one is trying to express is also assumed and does not need to be articulated. The careless reader will believe that the ducks are an objective correlative for Holden's greatness.

Although the remainder of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" contributes to an understanding of what the men in shirt sleeves represent, *The Catcher in the Rye* is little more than a pastiche of such symbols which are connected among themselves but never are tied to the reality (Holden's soul) for which they all stand. By the time Salinger wrote his novel, the theme of the break-down in communication had decayed from an original authentic discovery (e.g., as in *The Idiot*) to a stereotype.

Earlier in the development of the modern spirit the great were misunderstood, but when Salinger writes, the misunderstood are great. Hence, Salinger loads reality in such a way that Holden has to fail. Salinger and his readers have made an equation, learned from a tradition of literary heroes who fail, that failure is greatness. Only an audience that wanted to believe in this equation would feel sorry for Holden (and even for Prufrock in his own failure) instead of asking why "old Horowitz" should be expected to recognize that his young passenger's inquiry was a symbolic plea for understanding or why the Other in "Prufrock" could be expected to know that "lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows" was a symbol for some important comment on modern man.

*IV. The Collapse of Traditional Values*

Certainly a great deal of confusion exists today as to the *means* for the realization of values (communism, Christianity, humanism, etc.) and to the definition of these values. Every age, however, has suffered the anxiety-causing need for redefining traditional values and of finding ways of implementing them. But where is the absolute crisis? The authors themselves do not experience it.

Despite the unorthodoxy of subject matter, character, and style in contemporary literature the value systems of individual authors, as found in the overall themes of their works, are solid—so solid that a critic or teacher can relatively easily isolate and discuss them. The heroes may go through crises, but throughout the work the author's vision is steady and is affirmed by his works.

If we look at writers as diverse as Sartre, Henry Miller, Eliot, and Salinger, we find an affirmation of traditional values of justice, love, freedom, etc., despite the different ways these writers believe these abstractions are to be realized.

The crisis in values comes, then, not from the authors but from the Dead who are the aggressors in the sense that their violation of traditional values precipitates the crisis. To maintain the belief in the validity of the assumption of loss of values other people must be continually blackened. The stronger the attack on old values the more they are affirmed because the literate public is habituated to associate failing, lonely outsider-

heroes with excellence.

One of the most paradoxical facts in the development of modern literature is that the subjective parts are the most objective and the objective are actually the most subjective. That is, when an author is describing his own mind through any of the various forms of the interior monologue, he is fairly faithfully recording what is actually happening. But, when he is seemingly objectively describing people and things outside of himself, he is most blatantly controlling reality to fit his own ends and can put himself and his values in a position vis-a-vis society that will win him the most approval.

The conversion into assumption of the last generation's conclusions about the necessary failure of human value means that the way to win this favour is by constructing exterior reality in such a way that the good will be in constant, losing, crucial conflict with the Dead.

This critique is not intended to suggest that if we detached ourselves from these assumptions we would see the world as a better place. To the contrary, the urgency of the problems facing us does not permit literature to continue to rely uncritically on the validity of these concepts. They were the answers to a set of questions which dominated the imagination of the last generation.

Many of the uncertainties which face us today are, to some degree, different. To continue to rely on these answers as if they were true for all situations means that, in literature, reality must be twisted in such a way that the questions will fit the answers and our real problems go unfaced.

# IN SEARCH OF THE QUARK

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LEE EDSON

*The following article, abridged from "The New York Times Magazine" of October 8, 1967, is a report by a freelance journalist on the search for the "ultimate particle" of matter. Although abstruse concepts in physics are involved, what emerges for the general reader is a lively saga of the methodology of modern science.*

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS an intensive hunt has been going on all over the world for an elusive quarry known as the quark. This is no Alice-in-Wonderland adventure; far from it. The hunters are some of the world's leading physicists. The hunting grounds: almost anywhere from the high atmosphere to the bottom of the sea to the inside of the latest atom smasher.

Despite this painstaking search, the quark so far has remained as hard to track down as Lewis Carroll's Snark. There is an excellent reason. According to modern theoretical physicists, the quark, if it exists at all, is the simplest particle in the universe, out of which almost everything is made.

The excitement in confronting this incredibly wraith-like substance is some-

thing more sublime for a scientist than the discovery of a new application of his technical knowledge to everyday life. It is the immediate realization that through it we may uncover the missing linkage in our understanding of the structure of matter throughout the universe.

The men largely responsible for sending scientists on this wild quark chase are two California Institute of Technology physicists named Murray Gell-Mann and Richard Feynman. Each has won high honours. In 1965, Feynman shared the Nobel Prize for his achievements in explaining some of the abstruse mechanisms in the subatomic world.

## *A Kind of Charisma*

Gell-Mann and Feynman—who claim they work together separately—are nearly

unique in modern physics. In a field noted for quiet introversion, they generate a kind of charisma which draws students and faculty members to Cal Tech to an extent that had not been seen on the campus since the days of Robert Oppenheimer. The lectures of both men play to "Standing Room Only" audiences.

Although they have comparable intellectual impact, Feynman and Gell-Mann create their sparks in entirely different ways. Feynman, a lean, intense, dark-haired man of 49 who is beginning to fear that he may soon be regarded as a premature elder statesman, is a natural showman, full of enthusiasm for his subject. His lectures are couched in pithy, often rough-cut phrases—"I always try to say things differently."

Gell-Mann is less flamboyant but equally compelling on the platform. Eleven years Feynman's junior, he is round-faced and bespectacled, and looks somewhat like a jovial neighbourhood store-keeper. In the classroom, his lectures are clear, smooth, and amusing, and draw upon an extraordinary erudition. But he really excels among small groups.

If Feynman can be compared to a star who basks in the warmth of large audiences, Gell-Mann seems to enjoy the give-and-take intimacy of a seminar of bright, articulate graduate students. Like Robert Oppenheimer, he prefers a small but devoted following—and, indeed, he has declared often that a teacher lecturing in front of a class represents a primitive form of education.

One quality both men do have in common is an extraordinary capacity to make physics lucid and highly romantic. In part, the romance is made easy by the

nature of the world of physicists. In the pecking order of this society, the theoretical physicist is the glamour boy. After him come the experimentalist, the fellow in the laboratory, and then the engineers and applied physicists who make such things as sonar, rockets and hydrogen bombs.

### *The Ultimate Particle*

Right now, the theoretical physicists have captured the front and centre of scientific interest because they seem to be on the threshold of answering a long-asked, almost child-like question: What are things really made of? Have we at last come down to the last foundation stone from which we can build anything: a table, a human being, or a universe? Or must we go on looking at smaller and smaller pieces, and going deeper and deeper into a bottomless pit?

To answer these questions, one has to remember that from the very start of civilization philosophers have wanted to find a simple idea that would unite everything we experience in the world around us. So there has always been a search for the building block, like the cell or gene in biology.

To the fifth-century B.C. Greek Democritus belongs the honour of having declared that the simplest thing out of which everything else is made is an atom (*atmos* means "uncut"), and this idea sufficed for 2,000 years.

In the 19th century scientists came to realize that the atom was not the ultimate particle after all. Inside the atom was a nucleus, with electrons orbiting around it like the planets around the sun. Then, in

## IN SEARCH OF THE QUARK

the 20th century, scientists began to concentrate on the nucleus, and saw that this was no simple item either. It contained smaller things, such as neutrons and protons, which must be held together by a very strong force, perhaps the strongest in the universe. So the question for years was: What was this "strong interaction," this glue that held the nucleus together?

In 1935, a Japanese physicist, Hideki Yukawa, provided the first educated guess. He theorized that there was another particle in the nucleus, which he called a meson. It would act as a carrier of force between the proton and the neutron, so that energy would be exchanged among the particles pretty much as a football is passed between players in a game.

Two years later Dr. Carl Anderson of Cal Tech discovered a particle that he thought might be Yukawa's carrier. Physicists exulted. Things seemed neat again—until it was found that the new particle failed to obey predictions expected from the law of physics.

It took five years for physicists to realize that the new particle was not the Yukawa meson, but an unrelated particle known as a muon. After the war, as bigger and more powerful atom smashers appeared, a number of mesons were discovered, including the one suggested by Yukawa. This constituted a major advance in understanding the strong interaction—the interaction which is known to us in everyday life only through the power of the A-bomb.

By then the atom smashers were revealing all kinds of new and peculiar particles, whose mass was created out of the energy of motion. Most of them died out in incredibly brief periods—on the order of a

billionth of a second—but their trails could be photographed, and their presence raised new questions. How did they disintegrate? Were they complex structures in themselves?

### 42 Zeros

Feynman was one of the Young Turks of physics who in the nineteen-fifties addressed themselves to these thorny questions. (He had already earned a formidable reputation in theoretical physics because of his efforts in another area—applying quantum mechanics to electromagnetic radiations. For this work, 16 years later, he was to share the Nobel Prize with Dr. Julian Schwinger of Harvard and Dr. S. Tomonaga of Japan.)

Feynman's interest centred around a phenomenon that had intrigued scientists for years—the emission of fast-moving electrons from radio-active substances. This process, which goes under the name of "beta decay," had introduced physicists to a new force in the nucleus, a force quite different from the "strong interaction" that holds it together. Feynman was fired by the challenge of this insight and the subsequent revolutionary developments.

For one thing, physicists in the nineteen-fifties were discovering that the new force—or "weak interaction," as it came to be called—was far more widespread and manifested itself in many more reactions than beta decay. Indeed, it was on a par with the strong interaction, and with the two other universal forces known to science: electromagnetism, which keeps electrons perpetually spinning around a nucleus, and gravity, the weakest force of

all.

The weak interaction, which is now known to be involved in the decay of many strange particles, is 100,000 times weaker than the electromagnetic force. However, it is exceedingly more powerful than gravity, which is so incredibly feeble compared with the strong interaction that it takes a fraction with 42 zeros to describe its relative strength.

This kind of comparison delights Feynman. "Isn't nature wonderful," he says, raising his hands ecstatically, "to make something with 42 zeros!"

#### *The Overthrow of 'Parity'*

Another important development in physics in the nineteen-fifties was the overthrow of one of the fundamental laws in nature. It had long been thought that nature operates with a number of conservation laws, ranging from the familiar indestructibility of energy and matter to the conservation of lesser-known properties of the atom, such as those that explain the stability of the proton and the reason why some particles are created in atom smashers only in multiplets.

These laws were regarded as unchanging and universal. One of the most important of them was the one known as "the law of the conservation of parity." It said that if an object had a mirror image, that image would obey the laws of physics just like the real object. To satisfy this law, particles in the subatomic world could exist in one of two ways. The particle and its mirror image could be completely identical—like the word MOM, which reads the same in the real world and in the looking-glass world. Or

there could be two particles, a "left-handed" one and a "right-handed" one—one the mirror image of the other, like the words MAY and YAM.

Since the strong interactions obey this rule of parity, it was assumed that the weak interactions should also. But a striking thing was discovered in atom-smashing experiments involving a weak interaction. A particle was found that did not have an image fitting the pattern of MOM.

Were there actually two particles, with reversed symmetry, like MAY and YAM? But that suggestion did not jibe with further experiments, which continued to point to the existence of just one particle. In an inspired moment, Feynman and another physicist, Martin Block, offered the view that the law of parity might have failed for this particular weak interaction.

It was a prophetic suggestion. In an epic-making paper, two Chinese-born scientists, C.N. Yang and T.D. Lee, then of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton and Columbia University, suggested that perhaps *all* weak interactions violate the law of parity. They proposed experiments, which were carried out and proved them right. Their intuition won them the Nobel Prize in 1957. More important, they turned nuclear physics topsy-turvy.

Freed from the confines of parity, Feynman and Gell-Mann (along with E.C.G. Sudarshan and R.E. Marshak) tackled the problem of finding a way to describe the law of the weak interactions. In 1957, they developed a theory that shows how this force depends on various properties of the particles, such as their directions of spin, thus providing what is

now generally regarded as a major contribution to our understanding of the nucleus.

Feynman says that the discovery of this new law was the most exciting thing in his life, far more exciting than his earlier work that led to his Nobel Prize. "I won the prize for shoving a great problem under the carpet," he says, "but in this case there was a moment when I knew how nature worked. It had elegance and beauty." When several eminent physicists conducted experiments that seemed to vitiate it, Feynman insisted the experiments must be wrong. And so indeed they proved to be.

### *A Nuclear Grab Bag*

Gell-Mann experienced the thrill of another major and beautiful discovery a few years later. By then the number of particles emerging from the nucleus was increasing fantastically. Almost 100 had been counted by 1962. They had been classified into two main groups known as leptons (weakly interacting particles), or weaklies, as Feynman calls them, and hadrons, or stronglies.

Examples of the first group are positive and negative electrons, muons and neutrinos; the second group includes neutrons, protons and pions. (Just to confuse matters, each of these particles has an antiparticle carrying an opposite charge which annihilates the particle on contact.)

A subdivision of the hadrons is a group of particles which are known as "strange particles" because, instead of dying out as they should, they live to a relatively ripe old age. To round out this

picture, there is also the photon, a particle that carries the electromagnetic force—and, supposedly, there is a graviton for gravity, though this particle is yet to be found.

To bring some order into this nuclear grab bag, Gell-Mann introduced two new concepts. The first, which had developed as early as 1952, was a quality which he called "strangeness." As with the quark, it had a literary counterpart, this time in Sir Francis Bacon's line: "There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion."

Each particle could be assigned a degree of strangeness, depending on the number of steps in its disintegration, and thus it could be distinguished from its neighbours—just as a neutron can be distinguished from a proton by its different electric charge. (Gell-Mann did not know until later that a Japanese scientist named Nishijima working independently in Tokyo came to the same conclusion at about the same time.)

With the differences known, Gell-Mann set about seeing in what ways the particles were similar and whether they could all be slipped into a neat, organizational chart, more or less as Mendeleev had done with his periodic table of the chemical elements in the 19th century.

Gell-Mann recalls that he and Feynman tried one pattern after another without luck. Finally, one scheme seemed to work. The particles seemed to fit into families of eight or ten members, with similar characteristics of strangeness, electric charge and other properties, such as mass and spin. Even while Gell-Mann was doing this, Yuval Ne'eman, an Israeli military attache in London, studying for

his doctorate in physics, came upon the same scheme.

However, one family of particles in the table had only nine members instead of ten. It seemed incomplete. Gell-Mann thereupon predicted that, if a new member were found, it would have certain properties as indicated by its relatives in the same family of particles. Experimental physicists took up the hunt.

### *The Eightfold Way*

A couple of years later, a team of 33 scientists at Brookhaven National Laboratory came upon an important clue. They had bombarded nuclei and peered at more than 100,000 photographs of the interactions. In one of those pictures they saw the track of the missing particle, which was called omega-minus. It had a life expectancy of a 10-billionth of a second; and it had the basic properties predicted by Gell-Mann.

The existence of the omega-minus was shortly verified by scientists at the University of Maryland and thereafter independently at CERN, the great nuclear establishment in Switzerland.

Gell-Mann, with his flair for literary analogy, called his chart the Eightfold Way, as in the Buddhist dictum: "This is the noble truth that leads to cessation of pain. This is the noble eightfold way—right views, right intentions, right speech, right action...." More prosaic physicists call it the SU-3 theory because it is a symmetrical structure based on a triplet of fundamental particles.

The Eightfold Way hit physics like a bombshell. Gell-Mann occasionally marvels at the apparent simplicity of nature

that is revealed in the scheme. "Why should an aesthetic criterion be so successful so often?" he asks. "Is it just that it satisfies physicists?" Then, echoing Feynman, he declares: "I think there is only one answer—nature is inherently beautiful."

In recent months, a number of physicists have tried to go beyond the Eightfold Way and explain why nature operates with so many particles in this rather neat and poetic style. At Harvard, Dr. Julian Schwinger claims to have developed a simple mathematical theory to explain it all. Others, following Gell-Mann, have constructed a "quark model" in which neutrons and protons behave as if they were made of quarks—and, more than that, as if they were made of three quarks, each of which may come in three forms.

The reason why a number of scientists are seriously hunting real quarks (though Gell-Mann himself is not sure that they exist) is that theoretically they cannot decay into something else and thus a stable quark must be somewhere around, and may indeed have lasted since the birth of the universe.

Not all physicists agree, of course. At the University of California in Berkeley, Dr. Geoffrey Chew has taken a radical approach to the entire problem. He has developed a theory, known whimsically as the "bootstrap theory," which says that there really is no rock bottom fundamental particle like the quark or anything else; indeed, that the strong particles are made of one another, pulling themselves into existence, so to speak, by their own bootstraps.

"At first glance, this theory and our quark model may seem contradictory,"

Gell-Mann says, "but they may actually be quite compatible—and both may even be right—especially if the quark should turn out to be, as is likely, a useful mathematical figment rather than a concrete building block of matter."

#### *Playing Chess with a Martian*

In the last few years, Gell-Mann has been a missionary for the development of the world's largest atom smasher, the proposed 200-billion-electron-volt machine scheduled to be built at Weston, Illinois.

"I think particle physics is where atomic physics was in the early years of the century," Gell-Mann says. "We're getting an outline of an underlying structure, but there is still no complete theory of either strong or weak interactions which enables us to understand what is really happening at the bottom of everything.

"Recently an experiment performed by Princeton physicists has shown the violation of another law of symmetry that was thought to be valid (like parity 10 years ago). Some theorists went so far as

to speculate that a fifth natural force was involved, but that doesn't seem to be true. How is the violation occurring? Nobody seems to know at the moment, but I think we are on the verge of an important discovery."

Feynman says much the same, but in terms of a metaphor—playing chess with a Martian. "If you don't know the rules," he says, "and you see only parts of the board, how do you know how to play? If you know all the rules, can you tell what's in the Martian's mind when he moves the pieces in a certain way?

"The biggest mystery of physics is where the laws are known, but we don't know exactly what's going on. We don't know the strategy in the middle game. We know castling, or how the different pieces move, and we know a little bit about the end game, but nothing in the middle.

"We get reports from the experimentalists, the watchers of the chess game, and we try to analyze the information. We may even suggest a new experiment. But we're still waiting and hoping for the big strategy. Then maybe we'll really understand how wonderful is nature."

# IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

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ANNE AND JACOB SLOAN

*Mr. Sloan, currently editor of "The American Reporter," has contributed articles on American literature to various magazines. Mrs. Sloan, a former actress, has read American poetry extensively to Indian audiences.*

SOME THIRTY YEARS AGO, a perceptive critic of American literature pointed out that there have been two traditions in it, two kinds of writers: the red-skin, and the pale face. The chief red skin, vital, native, free-swinging, rhetorical, incantatory, optimistic, was Walt Whitman. The chief pale face was T.S. Eliot—civilized, ironic, pessimistic, inward-turned.

But the man who did most to popularize the pale skin tradition was Ezra Pound. He rebelled against what he regarded to be the extreme subjectivism, the meaningless prolixity and verbiage, the monotony of rhythm of the red skins. He was one of three poets who in 1912 formulated a trinity of principles that should determine the writing of a modern poem:

1. Direct treatment of the "thing," whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regards rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.

The pale faces won the battle of modern poetry. Eventually, Pound could look back and re-evaluate Walt Whitman, as the red skin pioneer who (paradoxically) had made the pale face revolution possible.

IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

A Pact

E Z R A P O U N D

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman—  
I have detested you long enough.  
I come to you as a grown child  
Who has had a pig-headed father;  
I am old enough now to make friends.  
It was you that broke the new wood,  
Now is a time for carving.  
We have one sap and one root—  
Let there be commerce between us.

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This is a friendly gesture on Pound's part, a handsome and public retraction and statement of debt, perfectly sincere and well-intentioned—one might think.

But the offer "let there be commerce between us" has not been taken at its full value by the other side—the Whitman camp of redskins—notably, the poet and critic Karl Shapiro. In a ringing denunciation, Shapiro has charged: "The most salient act of literary sabotage committed by Pound and Eliot has been their immolation of Walt Whitman."

A vehement foe of Modern poetry with a capital M, Shapiro has pointed out that in his *Pact* Pound was merely acknowledging what is obvious to the most casual eye and ear: that Whitman's free verse was a radical innovation in poetic form. But there is nothing in *Pact* about the substance of Whitman: his mystic "cosmic consciousness"; his vision of "democratic vistas"; his embrace of modern science; his all-encompassing identification with the human personality and potential.

In sum, Pound has ignored everything that is unique in Whitman, everything characteristic of this poet and man, that made him, in D.H. Lawrence's pungent phrase, "the first white aboriginal"—or the first American, which may be, as Shapiro has speculated, the same thing.

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True enough. Rereading Pound's *Pact* with Whitman in the light of Shapiro's strictures, one is struck by Pound's continued condescension to Whitman. There is an unmistakable ring of brazen superciliousness in Pound's recollection of his former "detestation"; and his characterization of his supposed progenitor as "pig-headed" may be shocking, but it is not endearing.

Clearly, Pound's hand is stretched out only so far and no farther. So the commerce one may expect to take place between the school of the self-avowed son Ezra Pound and his belatedly adopted father Walt Whitman will be very limited.

This is not surprising. In literature, as in life, fathers often serve their children the way trees serve growing cats—as rough bark on which to whet their claws. Whitman's chief value for the Modern school has been a negative one. His poetry has more often than not been taken as an unhealthy example of what to avoid.

And so our readings here include exemplars of the reaction against Whitman, of attempts by poets deliberately to set themselves apart from his influence, or to overcome it—as well as specimens of direct or indirect emulation of his themes and moods and manners.

At this point we shall let the poet speak for himself. Here is a characteristic poem by Walt Whitman:

### Grass

WALT WHITMAN

A child said *What is the grass?* Fetching it to me with full  
hands;  
How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any  
more than he.

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful  
green stuff woven.  
Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,  
A scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt,  
Bearing the owner's name some way in the corners, that we  
may see and remark, and say *Whose?*  
Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the  
vegetation.

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Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic,  
And it means, Sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow  
zones,  
Growing among black folks as among white,  
Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same,  
I receive them the same.

And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.  
Tenderly will I use you curling grass,  
It may be you transpire from the breasts of young men,  
It may be if I had known them I would have loved them,  
It may be you are from old people, or from offspring taken  
soon out of their mother's laps,  
And here you are the mother's laps.  
This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old  
mothers,  
Darker than the colourless beards of old men,  
Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.

O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues,  
And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of mouths for  
nothing.  
I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young men  
and women,  
And the hints about old men and mothers, and the offspring  
taken soon out of their laps.

What do you think has become of the young and old men?  
And what do you think has become of the women and children?

They are alive and well somewhere,  
The smallest sprout shows there is really no death,  
And if ever there was it led forward life, and does not wait at  
the end to arrest it,  
And ceas'd the moment life appear'd.  
All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,  
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and  
luckier.

From *Song of Myself*

DOES WHITMAN'S *Grass* satisfy the three Poundian poetic *desiderata*? Does he treat his "thing" (whether subjective or objective) directly? Does he hew to his presentation verbally? Is his rhythm the regular beat of a metronome or the fluid movement of a musical phrase?

The answers to these three questions are: No, No, and Yes.

In typical Whitman fashion, the poet roams far afield in speculating on the answer to the child's question, What is the grass? His "thing" becomes *both* subjective and objective. He guesses that the grass may be the flag of his own disposition; or it may be God's handkerchief; or it may be a child; or a hieroglyphic; or the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

From which point he shoots off on a very wide tangent indeed: to philosophize over what really becomes of the dead, and, finally, about death itself. In terms of the Poundian principles, this is very unsatisfactory poetic organization indeed, very sloppy.

Nor would Pound be entirely satisfied with Whitman's choice of language. Yes, there are some striking and interconnected images—notably the passage that leads from the "white heads of old mothers" to the "colourless beards of old men." But the leap to the "faint red roofs of mouths" is a big one; perhaps, Pound may argue, inorganic. And the phrase: "There is really no death"—how banal can a poet get?!

On the other hand, this poem does not suffer, as do many other, longer Whitman poems, from the monotonous chanting of long lists of names of places, occupations, sights—we have only "Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff." Pound would have no complaint on that score. He might, indeed, praise the fine balance of long and short musical phrases, and the correspondences between the movements of the lines and that of thought and feeling—the irregular alternations, the rises and falls of stanzas.

Yes, all in all, Pound might be willing to suspend his intuitive distaste for this kind of loose, random writing, might even admit that the many good things in this poem outweighed the few bad ones—if it were not for that last, bad stanza. If it were up to Pound, one might surmise, he would simply cut the last stanza out entirely. He might also fancy that he could with judicious pruning sharpen the poem, make it something of a small masterpiece—performing the same good craftsman's service for Whitman that he had done for Eliot in editing *The Waste Land*.

But the poet is dead, and the Whitmanophiles would cry sacrilege. More important, cutting the last stanza would be a terrible mistake. For it contains a magnificent sudden ending, the very last line that

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takes the reader by complete surprise: "And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier."

What a remarkable turn of the tables! yet one which, as you reread the poem, proves to be completely in keeping with the poem's movement and intention. For the poem ends as it began, with wonder, doubt, uncertainty—and yet withal, with hope. Which, after all, is exactly what "luck" is.

What seems at first to be mere anticlimactic topping of a proper climax is, in fact, what distinguishes the great poet from one who is merely good, a Whitman from a Pound, the sometimes faulty artist from the best craftsman of his generation, the prophetic genius from the talented professional, the creator from the critic.

The Shakespeares are always being criticised by the Dr. Johnsons of their age for overflowing the proper Aristotlean categories of unity, for failing to preserve the correct noble and elevated atmosphere and tone, for being comedians rather than tragedians because they allow their Hamlets the indulgence of terrible, bawdy puns ("Get thee to a nunnery.") It is no accident that the best tragedy by the best writer in the English language, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* itself, has been bowdlerized, cut, attenuated, reformed, *improved* by each successive literary generation since it was written.

Whitman, too, does not fit comfortably in the clothing of Modern literature. His gestures are too grand. Like Shakespeare again, he aims to represent man and Nature whole, warts and all. Refusing to play safe, they more often fail. But their successes are incomparable. Whitman's monumental power sweeps all objections aside, and the basic harmony that always asserts itself at the end, as it does in *Grass*, is the saving and transcending grace.

Not so, unfortunately, with those who have followed in his wake, his neater and more conventional, more disciplined disciples.

We go on to an exercise on the same theme by a student of the master's. Here is Carl Sandburg's version of *Grass*.

### Grass

C A R L S A N D B U R G

Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.

Shovel them under and let me work—

I am the grass; I cover all.

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And pile them high at Gettysburg  
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.  
Shovel them under and let me work.

Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor  
What place is this?  
Where are we now?  
I am the grass.  
Let me work.

FROM "CORNHUSKERS" BY CARL SANDBURG. COPYRIGHT 1918 BY HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON, INC., COPYRIGHT 1946 BY CARL SANDBURG. REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON.

WHEN CARL SANDBURG'S *Chicago Poems* came out in 1916, the public response was immediate and enthusiastic. It was evident that he had learned from Walt Whitman. But that is not to say that he was a mere echo of Whitman. Rather, Sandburg staked out for himself certain areas of the Whitman landscape as congenial to his own temperament, experience, view of life.

It has been estimated that fully half of Whitman's best poetry is war poetry, poetry on Lincoln and his death, and poetry on death itself. A great deal of Sandburg's poetry, like the poem we have just read, moves in the same ambiance. (Sandburg wrote a massive, six-volume biography of Lincoln).

Then again, Whitman was the first American poet to step out from behind his comfortable poetic desk and plunge into the living scene of the workaday world. It was his desire to identify and merge himself with all ages, classes, conditions of humanity, in all situations: the "well-married" husband and wife, the "child who went forth every day," the learned astronomer, the sea captain, the "O Pioneer"—all of his contemporary society.

Sandburg's identification was more narrow. He had himself worked as a casual labourer before he began to write, so his inclination was to chronicle the common man as worker—farmer, butcher, steel worker. He limited his focus to the part of America he knew best, the Middle West. Paradoxically, his narrower focus tends, as in this case, to produce a blurred image. The "passengers" in Sandburg's *Grass* are invisible, undefined, anonymous, asking simple-minded questions (Where are we?), rather than the sharply visualized, vivid agents of history we find in Whitman: "I saw old General at bay/Old as he was, his gray eyes yet shone out in battle like stars."

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Finally, the most apparent difference between the old master and his epigone: style. To Sandburg's generation, Whitman's kind of verbal extravagance ("the sorrowful vast phantom"), his rhetorical invocations ("Bards of the great Idea! bards of the peaceful inventions!"), his grand manner—all were old-fashioned, long-winded, irrelevant to the quickened speech of the 20th century, even comical.

The modern age preferred brevity to ecstasy; it was distrustful of philosophy, however lofty. "Make it fast, make it right, make it new."

Hence the short phrases and lines, the monosyllabic words in Sandburg's *Grass*. The link with Hemingway is clear: the same no nonsense, hard, clean, sometimes deliberately brutal language ("shovel them under"). The effect is startling, even shocking. The message is pointed.

In fifty years, Sandburg has not worn well, even in his most accomplished poems, like this one. The poem is still alive, still immediate—but that is all. For it has no depth, no resonance; it leaves no afterglow. Something very important is missing: a palpable, expanding centre—the centre of self that makes Whitman so exciting.

Perhaps this may be due to Sandburg's deficiencies as a poet, not to his poetic method, and the comparison with Whitman is unjust. But, whatever the reason, Whitman's grass, like his people, is alive, growing, natural, many-coloured. Sandburg's grass, however hard it works, is like the bodies it covers, inert and dead.

Edgar Lee Masters was a contemporary of Sandburg's, and like him, a regional, realistic poet. Masters undertook to distinguish the faces in the lonely crowd of modern society. *The Hill*, a kind of introduction to Masters' most notable book, *Spoon River Anthology*, takes off directly from the question at the end of Whitman's *Grass*: "What do you think has become of the young and old men?/And what do you think has become of the women and children?" Here is Masters' bitter-sweet reply.

### The Hill

EDGAR LEE MASTERS

Where are Elmer, Herman, Bert, Tom and Charley,  
The weak of will, the strong of arm, the clown, the boozer, the  
fighter?  
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

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One passed in a fever,  
One was burned in a mine,  
One was killed in a brawl,  
One died in a jail,  
One fell from a bridge toiling for children and wife—  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Ella, Kate, Mag, Lizzie and Edith,  
The tender heart, the simple soul, the loud, the proud, the  
happy one?—  
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

One died in shameful child-birth,  
One of a thwarted love,  
One at the hands of a brute in a brothel,  
One of a broken pride, in the search for heart's desire,  
One after life in far-away London and Paris  
Was brought to her little space by Ella and Kate and Mag—  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where are Uncle Isaac and Aunt Emily,  
And old Towny Kincaid and Sevigne Houghton,  
And Major Walker who had talked  
With venerable men of the revolution?—  
All, all, are sleeping on the hill.

They brought them dead sons from the war,  
And daughters whom life had crushed,  
And their children fatherless, crying—  
All, all are sleeping, sleeping on the hill.

Where is Old Fiddler Jones  
Who played with life all his ninety years,  
Braving the sleet with bared breast,  
Drinking, rioting, thinking neither of wife nor kin,  
Nor gold, nor love, nor heaven?  
Lo! he babbles of the fish-frys of long ago,  
Of the horse-races of long ago at Clary's Grove,  
Of what Abe Lincoln said  
One time at Springfield.

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"FROM SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY," BY EDGAR LEE MASTERS.  
REPRINTED BY PERMISSION OF MRS. ELLEN C. MASTERS.

## IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

"OF WHAT ABE LINCOLN said/One time at Springfield." How affectionate is the nostalgic reverence for the great, martyred President! To Masters, as to the simple people of Spoon River, Lincoln was a folk hero, an embodiment of every mother's dreams: her boy, too, though born in a rough-hewn log cabin in the wilderness, could, by sheer force of intelligence and character, work his way up, from lowly rail-splitter and grocery boy, through teacher, lawyer, State Representative, to become President of the United States. He too could maintain the Union through a bloody Civil War—finally to have his name resound through the ages as the man who set the slaves free.

And yet, a bare decade after setting down these stirring lines, their author wrote a biography exposing the feet of clay of *Lincoln the Man*. How explain this reversal of attitude, from adulation to cynicism? The answer would seem to lie in the poet's aspiration to sail in the wake of Walt Whitman—and his frustration when his ship was becalmed.

Edgar Lee Masters began as a conventional, and quite mediocre poet. Suddenly, in 1914, he found his own voice. His new inspiration came from three sources: from antiquity, from his own experience, and from Whitman via Sandburg. Reading the classic Greek Anthology, with its brief epigrams and epitaphs, Masters decided to memorialize the people he knew so well, those who lived in the small towns of his home state of Illinois. The example of his friend, Carl Sandburg, encouraged Masters to try his hand at the free verse form Walt Whitman had pioneered.

*Spoon River Anthology* represents the self-spoken epitaphs of citizens buried in the town's cemetery. As in the poem we have read, *The Hill*, the book's tone ranges from an elegiac sadness, through an occasional lyrical affirmation of life to (in the words of Marcus Cunliffe) "a gaunt, rueful exposure of shame and disappointment."

*Spoon River Anthology*, with its overwhelming impression of despair and constriction in the backwaters of American life, was popular for a few years, then sank out of sight. Several years ago, a small troupe of four actors scored a brief *success d'estime* with a programme of recitations of some of the poems. Each actor assumed the persona of one of the characters and recited his own encapsulated biography. On the stage, the limitations of Masters' *Anthology* were highlighted. Some of the lines were moving; but none of the poems, or the individual roles, was truly memorable. The figures disappeared back into the crowd, into the dead past, as the actors finished speaking.

As in the case of Sandburg, the poems' lack of sustaining power may be ascribed as much to the poet's inadequate mastery of the free

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verse form as to his essentially local, provincial view of reality.

Free verse, which to the naked eye seems so innocent a form, is really a most demanding one. The poet needs a near perfect ear to avoid lapses into poeticised prose. And the form seems to invite the kind of trite diction, the conventional metaphor that mars even *The Hill*. "Strong of arm," "tender heart," "simple soul," "heart's desire"—Masters has allowed his townspeople to speak the speech current in their culture for the sake of verisimilitude. But free verse cannot be as free with colloquialism as can regular metrical form, where the imposed compression suggests heightened emotion.

Whitman, of course, the originator of the form, faced the same peril of drabness and ordinariness. How he overcame it may be seen from his poem, "I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing."

### I Saw In Louisiana A Live-Oak Growing

WALT WHITMAN

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,  
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,  
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of  
dark green,  
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,  
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone  
    there without its friend near, for I knew I could not,  
And I broke off a twig a certain number of leaves upon it, and  
twined around it a little moss,  
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight, in my room,  
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,  
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)  
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly  
love;  
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana  
solitary in a wide flat space,  
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend a lover near,  
I know very well I could not.

IN THIS MUCH-HAILED poem Whitman does indeed skate on thin ice

## IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

in at least two lines. One of these lines an unsympathetic reader might well be justified in accusing of tedious long-windedness: "But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there without its friends near, for I know I could not." That is quite a mouthful. The other is the parenthetic ("For I believe lately I think of little else than of them") which that same cold-hearted reader might well wince at, a humdrum thought expressed in unimaginative language.

But a poem may be raised to an unassailable peak by one wonderful image—just as it can be plunged into oblivion by a sufficiently bad one. Luckily, this poem has two flashes of magnificent language: the live-oak "glistens" in "a wide flat space," and it "utters joyous leaves of dark green." One figure is for the eye, the other for the ear; both are notable for combining in a brief space two basic elements that sustain all of Whitman's writings.

Despite his famous, much-lamented wordiness, Whitman throws out literally hundreds of such breathtaking gems, where he puts his entire philosophy, his entire sensibility, in a nutshell. Each is a perfect bull's eye of the imagination. "A gay gang of blackguards"; "The deacons are ordained with crass'd hands at the altar"; "The hard unsunk ground"; "The young men float on their backs, their white bellies bulge to the sun"; "the hiss of the surgeon's knife"; "I have knitted the knot of old contrariety"; "the lank loose-gown'd women... silent old-faced infants...sharp-lipp'd unshaved men"—and the visionary poet himself, seen with complete candour as standing "amused, complacent, compassionating, idle, unitary." These words leap from the pages; they fairly lift us out of the seats of the mockers. This is the essence of poetry.

What is Whitman driving at in "I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing"? This poem is Whitman's concrete, and as always very personal, statement of the two principles he saw operating everywhere in the universe: animism and vitalism.

Whitman believed that all of Nature, all objects, possess a natural life or vitality and are endowed with indwelling souls. He also believed that the functions of a living organism are due to some vital principle or force. These beliefs, animism and vitalism, are both scientific and philosophic doctrines. To Whitman they were incontrovertible; every moment of his personal experience bore witness to their reality. They are the dynamism that moves this poem.

The oak tree is live; it can utter its soul in dark green leaves (the vision recurs through the poem) because it is at one with every other object in the universe, whether present or not; it needs no special personal friend because it is completely at home with all other living

things. Whitman cannot stand thus alone, friendless. Yet in some mysterious, empathetic fashion his memento of the oak leaf consoles the poet in his weakness. For it reminds him of "manly love"—the principle connecting man with both animism and vitalism—the open and continuously flowing communication between all beings, however outwardly disparate.

Rabindranath Tagore, who has translated *I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing*, has said: "In modern Western literature, Walt Whitman has written the prose lyric. While it is no different from plain prose in form, the mood his lyric expresses lifts it unquestionably to the height of poetry...This poem has the beauty of emotional excellence. I would call it the rhythm of thought."

Poetry as the rhythm of thought links Walt Whitman with a modern American poet who, at first glance, seems remote from his influence: Wallace Stevens. Stevens, a Modernist par excellence, is not an heir of Whitman in the sense, say, of avowed Whitmanians like Hart Crane and the more recent beat poets, such as Allan Ginsberg. Joseph Riddel has pointed out that "on points of difference Whitman and Stevens dramatise a century of change in the American conscience," which he describes as "the movement from cosmic consciousness to an existential consciousness."

The nature of this movement is evident when we compare Whitman's *I Saw in Louisiana* with a Stevens' masterpiece, *Anecdote of the Jar*.

### Anecdote Of The Jar

WALLACE STEVENS

I placed a jar in Tennessee,  
And round it was, upon a hill.  
It made the slovenly wilderness  
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,  
And sprawled around, no longer wild.  
The jar was round upon the ground  
And tall and of a port in air.

## IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

It took dominion everywhere.  
The jar was gray and bare.  
It did not give of bird or bush,  
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

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ONE WOULD THINK that two poems on a similar theme—two still lifes—could not be more different. Their differences illuminate the change in American poetry introduced by the Modernists, from Whitman's universal Romantic empathy to Stevens' classic principle of disinterested order.

What the jar Stevens places in Tennessee does is to impose order on the slovenly wilderness that surrounds the hill, whose roundness corresponds to its own. The jar does not move; it does not go out to the wilderness; rather, its mere presence makes the wilderness rise up to it. Whitman's live-oak in Louisiana-glistened, dark green. Stevens' jar is gray and bare. It is like nothing else in Tennessee; it does not "give" of bird or bush—or to bird and bush. It simply *is*. Yet it takes dominion everywhere.

Stevens has very carefully distinguished his jar from Whitman's live-stock, in every way one can imagine. Whitman *saw* his oak standing in Louisiana; Stevens *places* his jar in Tennessee. One is a natural object; the other a man-made one. Yet Whitman identifies with his oak; Stevens keeps his distance from his jar as he describes the jar's distance from its surroundings. Manly love is what the live-oak reminds Whitman of; dominion—power—is the key concept of Stevens' jar.

Yet, these two poems, apparently so dissimilar, reveal a preoccupation shared by both poets, a preoccupation with consciousness. Whitman attributes what Riddel calls a "cosmic consciousness" to the live-oak; it seems to stand alone, and yet it is related, in some mysterious organic way with all of creation, including the poet. Stevens' poem is about "existential consciousness"—the consciousness that the poet brings to our attention of the pervasive, over-riding power of the mere fact of existence, presence. In both cases, it is the imaginative power of the poet himself, identifying with and identifying consciousness, that is the underlying theme of the poem.

Elsewhere, Stevens in describing Walt Whitman has brilliantly

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described both Whitman's cosmic consciousness and his own existential one:

*In the far South the sun of autumn is passing  
Like Walt Whitman walking along a ruddy shore.  
He is singing and chanting the things that are part of him,  
The worlds that were and will be, death and day.  
Nothing is final, he chants. No man shall see the end,  
His beard is of fire and his staff is a leaping flame.*

What these two poets agree on is the staff that is a leaping flame—poetry as a creative force. For Whitman, poetry is the creative force of love; for Stevens, it is the creative force of the imagination, imposing order on reality.

But the best demonstration of the meaning of a poetic concept is always the poetry itself. After all, the concept derives from the poem, not vice versa.

Here is a brief passage from Whitman, beginning "The Orchestra Whirls Me" which describes the poet's experience of "cosmic consciousness" far better than anyone else's words can.

From "The Orchestra Whirls Me..."

WALT WHITMAN

The orchestra whirls me wider than Uranus flies,  
It wrenches such ardours from me I did not know I possess'd  
    them,  
It sails me, I dab with bare feet, they are lick'd by the indolent  
    waves,  
I am cut by bitter and angry hail, I lose my breath,  
Steep'd amid honey'd morphine, my windpipe throttled in fakes  
    of death,  
At length let up again to feel the puzzle of puzzles,  
And that we call Being.

THESE ARE "wild and whirling words," are they not? How can one possibly talk *about* them—or about the poet's ecstatic mystical experience induced by music from an invisible orchestra.

## IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

One can only agree with Randall Jarrell that here Whitman "has something difficult to express, something that there are many formulas, all bad, for expressing; he expresses it with complete success, in language of the most dazzling originality.

"One hardly knows what to point at—everything works. But wrenches and *It sails me, I dab with bare feet; lick'd by the indolent waves; steep'd amid honey'd morphine; windpipe throttled in fakes of death....*" One can only agree with Jarrell that "this originality is often at Whitman's command," and one cannot praise it too much.

There are not many poets so overpoweringly unique in a generation. In England, at the time when Whitman was writing, he was matched in intensity and concentration of vision only by one poet. Like Wallace Stevens, the Jesuit priest Gerard Manley Hopkins seems at the opposite pole from Whitman.

Yet Hopkins, himself, was one of the first to recognize Whitman's special quality; surprisingly the English Christian felt a kinship with the pantheistic American. After seeing five or six of Whitman's poems in a newspaper review, Hopkins admitted, reluctantly: "I may as well say what I should not otherwise have said, that I always knew in my heart Walt Whitman's mind to be more like my own than any other man's living. As he is a very great scoundrel, this is not a very pleasant confession."

But judge for yourself:

### Spring

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

Nothing is so beautiful as spring—

When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;

Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush

Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring

The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;

The glassy pear-tree leaves and blooms, they brush

The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush

With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning

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In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,  
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,  
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,  
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

THE MAGNIFICENCE of language and compression of spiritual feeling in a brief compass that these two poems share are hard to match in poetry in the English tongue.

Whitman's influence on the serious poetry, the high culture of his time and ours, is apparent. But Whitman was, in the best sense of the word, a popular poet as well. Contemporary light verse has benefited from the liberating effect of Whitman's free verse. Perhaps the finest practitioner of light verse, Ogden Nash, has cleverly adopted Whitman's long, free-running line to mock the conventional straining after rhyme. Here is Nash as he contemplates his own odd "Portrait of the Artist as a Prematurely Old Man."

Portrait Of The Artist As A Prematurely Old man

OGDEN NASH

It is common knowledge to every schoolboy and even every Bachelor of Arts,  
That all sin is divided into two parts.  
One kind of sin is called a sin of commission, and that is very important,  
And it is what you are doing when you are doing something you ortant,  
And the other kind of sin is just the opposite and is called a sin of omission and is equally bad in the eyes of all right-thinking people, from Billy Sunday to Buddha,  
And it consists of not having done something you shudda.  
I might as well give you my opinion of these two kinds of sin as long as, in a way, against each other we are pitting them,  
And that is, don't bother your head about sins of commission because however sinful, they must at least be fun or else you wouldn't be committing them.

IN THE WAKE OF WALT WHITMAN

It is the sin of omission, the secnd kind of sin,  
That lays eggs under your skin.  
The way you get really painfully bitten  
Is by the insurance you haven't taken out and the checks you  
haven't added up the stubs of and the appointments you  
haven't kept and the bills you haven't paid and the letters  
you haven't written.

Also, about sins of omission there is one particularly painful lack  
of beauty,  
Namely, it isn't as though it had been a riotous red letter day or  
night every time you neglected to do your duty;  
You didn't get a wicked forbidden thrill  
Every time you let a policy lapse or forgot to pay a bill;  
You didn't slap the lads in the tavern on the back and loudly  
cry Whee,  
Let's all fail to write just one more letter before we go home,  
and this round of un-written letters is on me.  
No, you never get any fun  
Out of the things you haven't done,  
But they are the things that I do not like to be amid,  
Because the suitable things you didn't do give you a lot more  
trouble than the unsuitable things you did.  
The moral is that it is probably better not to sin at all, but if  
some kind of sin you must be pursuing  
Well, remember to do it by doing rather than by not doing.

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# BOOK WORLD

*WILLIAM JAMES : A BIOGRAPHY*  
By Gay Wilson Allen, New York: Viking Press.  
556 pp. \$10

*Reviewed by Richard W.B. Lewis*

*Professor Lewis of Yale University, is the author of "The American Adam" and "The Picaresque Saint."*

WHEN WILLIAM JAMES died on August 26, 1910 the *Boston Evening Transcript* referred to him as "the greatest of contemporary Americans."

Certainly he was one of the greatest. At least two of his books—*The Varieties of Religious Experience* and *Pragmatism*—are among the living masterpieces of American literature; and at least two of his essays—"The Will to Believe" (1896) and "The Moral Equivalent of War" (1906)—not only retain their compelling interest, but are of increased importance and relevance this very year, this very week.

He was also, of course, a noble pioneer in "mental science" and psychic research; a prose stylist of high distinction; and for long years a major and enormously influential force, with George Santayana and the others in what James called the "genuine philosophical universe at Harvard."

Most of all, perhaps, he was a leading citizen and one of the most potent personalities in that astonishing republic, the James family (to adapt his brother Henry's phrase)—one of the three or four most remarkable families in this country's history.

A principal merit of Gay Wilson Allen's

crowded and constantly informative biography is Mr. Allen's well and newly documented account of that family, and his demonstration that, for all its immense intellectual vigour, it was a family beset by personal calamities and disorders.

William himself experienced eye trouble and nervous strain from the time he was 18, and was prey to various kinds of physical and mental torment on and off for 50 years hereafter.

But he became a devoted husband and a loving father, with a marvellous fund of sheer humanity. The latter is repeatedly evinced in the jaunty classroom techniques, in anecdotes and letters.

Especially memorable is the picture of America's greatest philosopher taking his wife and four children to Europe in 1892, and writing back to a friend in comical despair that "to combine novel anxieties of the most agonizing kind about your children's education, nocturnal and diurnal contact...with their shrieks, their quarrels, their questions, their rollings-about and tears...to combine these things (I say) with a *holiday* for *oneself* is an idea worthy to emanate from a lunatic asylum."

And there are the really extraordinary letters he wrote to his dying father and his

dying sister; James deserves a place in some pantheon for those alone.

Beyond this, there are the mind and spirit of the man, and his courage. It was his own experience of interior devastation that led to the inquiries that culminated first in the long delayed but epochal *Principles of Psychology* (1890), and then to the more enduring *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).

It led to his insistence, regarding the latter, on "a sphere of life larger and more powerful than our usual consciousness," the impulsions from which "melt our hearts and communicate significance and value to everything."

No less splendid and no less pertinent was James' articulate revulsion from the "barbaric patriotism" espoused by Congress in 1898, and his lecture urging a "morel equivalent" for the wars let loose by mankind's destructive instincts—a lecture which, Mr. Allen quite rightly declares, rested on the same diagnosis and proposed the same cure involved in President Kennedy's plan for the Peace Corps.

Above all, there was the conviction that lay at the heart of James' philosophy, his psychology, his religious thought, and his public and pedagogical posture. This was the conviction, arrived at in the anguish of his severest crisis and then writ large in *Pragmatism* (1907) and *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), that the individual does have some real measure of freedom, that he is not the helpless victim of history or of some absolute fixity in the nature of things.

It was his developing doctrine of "indeterminism." In this view, "actualities seem to float in a wider sea of possibilities from out of which they were chosen; and somewhere, indeterminism says, such possibilities exist, and form part of the truth."

That is a metaphysical statement, but also a moral and political statement, and it says that there are options in life, however limited. I can think of nothing we need to hear more. Gay Wilson Allen has earned our gratitude by showing that William James may well have been a man for all seasons; he is certainly a man for the terrible and bewildering season that is upon us.

*THE PROGRESSIVE HISTORIANS:  
TURNER, BEARD, PARRINGTON*  
By Richard Hofstadter. New York: Knopf. 498 pp. \$8.95

*Reviewed by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.*

*The reviewer is a historian and the author of "The Age of Jackson," "The Age of Roosevelt," and "A Thousand Days,"—the story of the Kennedy Administration, in which he was Special Assistant to the President. His review is abridged from "Book World."*

THE WORD *HISTORY* commonly means two somewhat different things. Sometimes it simply means the past; sometimes it means what historians make of the past.

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Since the past by definition is inaccessible and irrecoverable, the interpretation—on occasion even the factual record—of the past can never be final; the adjective "definitive," without which some book reviewers would

go out of business, is rarely used by the serious historian. So written history lives on in mysterious symbiotic relationship with history-as-actuality.

Few American historians have been more sensitive to the complicated interaction between history and the historian than Richard Hofstadter, and no historian today is writing about this problem with such brilliance and penetration.

In *The Progressive Historians* Mr. Hofstadter makes an extended reckoning with the three American historians who most deeply influenced his (and my) intellectual generation—Frederick Jackson Turner, with his frontier interpretation of American history; Charles Austin Beard, with his economic interpretation; and Vernon Louis Parrington, with his conception of American letters as a battleground between conservatism and democracy. What seems to have started Hofstadter on this settling of accounts was his desire to answer an uncomfortable question: why do these historians, whom we all once found so exciting, seem today so inadequate and even irrelevant?

This inquiry led him to consider the more general issues raised by the progressive orthodoxy of which they were the most influential examples; and the reconsideration of history-as-conflict stimulated him to a revaluation of history-as-consensus which became the new historical orthodoxy in the 1950's. The result is a fascinating study in historiographical criticism and, in a larger sense, in American intellectual history.

#### *History and Conflict*

In a brief but highly suggestive opening chapter, Hofstadter delineates the character of the historical enterprise in America before the progressive historians came on the scene. The 19th century was, in the main, the age of the great New England gentlemen-amateurs

—George Bancroft, Francis Parkman, William H. Prescott, above all Henry Adams (whose work, Hofstadter notes, has been “acclaimed—I think rightly—as the summit of American achievement in historical writing”).

Then toward the end of the century, the rise of the graduate school and of “scientific” history brought about a rather rapid professionalization of historians. It also summoned men of new geographic and social origins to the writings of history.

Turner was born in Wisconsin in 1861, Parrington in Illinois in 1871, Beard in Indiana in 1874. They shared, in somewhat divergent forms, the belief that the idea of “political and economic conflict” was the key to American history. “They took,” Hofstadter writes, “the writing of American history out of the hands of the Brahmins and the satisfied classes, where it had too exclusively rested, and made it responsive to the intellectual needs of new types of Americans who were beginning to constitute a productive, insurgent intelligentsia.”

In so doing, these men “above all others” explained “the American liberal mind to itself in historical terms”; they “gave us the pivotal ideas of the first half of the twentieth century.”

There follow three long, subtle and searching essays on the great progressive historians—essays which in their skillful interweaving of biography and analysis should serve as models for historiographical writing.

Hofstadter sees his subjects in relation not only to their historical ideas but to their families, their education, their jobs, their colleagues, their politics and their temperaments. These were men highly responsive to the intellectual currents of their day—the new Midwestern nationalism, the progressive impulse in politics, and, for Turner and Beard at least, the “scientific” impulse in history.

They were also men of a striking, old-fashioned grandeur. Hofstadter writes about them with a personal sympathy which makes his critical reservations all the more convincing.

#### 'Parricidal Forays'

His discussion of Turner's frontier thesis (which located the main sources of American character and development not in Europe or the Atlantic seaboard but in the movement of the country westward) is masterly; his account of Turner's writing difficulties perceptive. He concedes to Turner a poetic sense of the "awareness of space" and "delight in movement" which has marked the American experience, but finds him lacking in strong feeling for the comedy and tragedy of history.

"The great merit of Turnerism, for all its elliptical and exasperating vagueness," he concludes, "was to be open-ended." Of all American historians, only Turner—in his *The Frontier in American History*—"opened a controversy that was large enough to command the attention of his peers for four generations."

One has the impression that, of all Hofstadter's "parricidal forays," the reassessment of Beard engages him personally the most. After all, he has been involved for 30 years in defining his intellectual relationship with Beard.

His present discussion of Beard concentrates perhaps unduly on *An Economic Interpretation of The Constitution*, a work Hofstadter now finds ambiguous and naïve, with an unfortunate "aura of the sinister and the conspiratorial." He is superb in his comment on Beard's literary style, thoughtful in his appraisal of Beard's sallies into the philosophy of history (he finds them stimulating to the profession but ultimately shallow) and judicious in his discussion of Beard's relations with public affairs, especially his increasingly

embittered and obsessive attacks on Franklin Roosevelt.

In some respects, the essay on Parrington and his *Main Currents in American Thought* is the freshest thing in the book. No previous characterization has told us so much about the man, the vicissitudes of his career (at one time he was football coach at the University of Oklahoma), the extent of his self-education and of his professional isolation. Hofstadter sees him "as an original, a kind of direct, native, self-made writer."

He writes discriminately and not unadmiringly about Parrington's style, acknowledges his great if transient influence and finds no reason to quarrel against the "abrupt decline" of his reputation.

#### *Rediscovering Complexity*

The effect of the progressive historians, in Hofstadter's view, was to overdramatize and oversimplify the complex and shifting actuality of the national experience. The progressive historians relied too heavily on geographical or economic determinism; they saw past conflicts as direct analogues of present conflicts; they tended to impute discreditable motives to historical figures on the "wrong" side; they drifted on occasion toward conspiratorial interpretations of events.

After the Second World War, "the tide began to run out for this view of our history," and the notion of America-as-conflict began to be replaced by the notion of America-as-consensus.

Some historians, of course, have placed Hofstadter himself in the consensus school; and, indeed, his book of 1948, *The American Political Tradition* was the first influential statement of the consensus view. Hofstadter notes the surrounding conditions which encouraged the rise of consensus history—the disenchantment with Europe, the renewal of

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interest in American uniqueness, the rise of the cold war, the "end of ideology," the conservatism of the age of Eisenhower.

But he insists, quite correctly, that consensus history is politically neutral; it may be written from the viewpoint of radicals disliking the system as well as from the viewpoint of conservatives celebrating the system. In this respect Hofstadter's *The American Political Tradition* is very different from a book like Daniel Boorstin's *The Genius of American Politics*.

Hofstadter has today, as he says, an "essentially ambivalent attitude" toward consensus history. He credits it with "the rediscovery of complexity" in the American past—with a new focus on the religious, ethnic and racial complex of American life, on immigration, acculturation, nativism, race, slavery, mobility, status tensions.

But in the end, it is an "essentially negative proposition...As a positive principle, it does not go very far." Consensus history has not been able to explain the American Revolution or the Civil War or the continuing racial, ethnic and religious violence of the American past.

Hofstadter concludes, "In one form or another conflict finally does remain, and ought to remain, somewhere near the centre of our focus of attention." As a result, however, of the consensus fling, we can "return to the assessment of conflict in American life and thought without going straight back to the arms of the Progressives."

Some critics will say that, as consensus history reflected the alleged domestic tranquillity of the Eisenhower years, so the revival of history-as-conflict reflects the savage turbulence of the late 1960's; and I am sure Hofstadter would agree.

One of his great merits as a historian is his acute awareness of the relativism of history and the creative readiness with which he revises his own historical judgments. "At one time or another," he writes of the progressive historians, "I have changed my mind about each of these men, and it is by no means inconceivable to me that on some counts I may change it again. The historical returns are never complete."

One cannot end without mentioning the extraordinary grace and felicity of Hofstadter's own sensibility and style. He notes that "a fine feeling for the nuances of ideas was hardly the strongest quality of the Progressive mind"; but it is one of the strong qualities of his own mind, and he has the capacity to express these nuances with exquisite precision.

This is a distinguished book about distinguished historians by a distinguished historian. Hofstadter, it must be said, has tended through much of his career to respond with greater alacrity to historians than to history; and his colleagues must hope that, now that he has balanced his accounts with the historical fathers of us all, he will begin to turn his attention from interpretations of the past to the past itself.

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# THE AMERICAN REVIEW

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# THE AMERICAN REVIEW

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# THE BOWSPRIT

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THE LEARNED JOURNALS in America have continued in their usual tenor during the past year, publishing articles by scientists and scholars on whatever may be the authors' latest hypotheses, techniques, creations, or insights in their special fields. Meanwhile many of the magazines intended for the educated generalist have shifted away from a diversity of themes in a single issue to a concentration on some one topic of the day as seen from different viewpoints. Some of their articles are thoughtful; occasional ones are fresh; many of them are repetitively stale though earnest. Together they reflect something of the pluralism of aspirations and ways of thinking in America today.

A topical emphasis is a useful device in a period like this which is groping forward, not just groping, without a compass. (Or perhaps it has a compass but cannot read it?) Like lost wayfarers discussing together which way to turn, contemporary magazines of opinion seek all sorts of views about a common concern and encourage a grand public debate on it. The purpose, of course, is not simply to enjoy argument—and sell magazines. There is an over-riding moral dimension involved: to help provide the stuff out of which Americans can create an informed consensus as to the directions of their next round of national endeavour.

This issue of the *Review* suggests the format popular now in America. It concentrates largely on one topic, the concerns and attitudes of many college youth as

## THE AMERICAN REVIEW

depicted in a sampling of their and their elders' writing. The emphasis is deliberately not on the Black Militants\*, who have easily understandable objectives, but on the puzzling conflicts of attitudes among other students, white and black, and the deeply troubling antagonisms which some of their methods reveal. The editor regrets the absence of a statement by a member of the radical Students for a Democratic Society; its members seem to have been too involved in action to write informative essays.

First come articles by three young men on what students want: a political liberal—Edward Schwartz in *A View from the Liberal-Left*; a political conservative —Arnold Steinberg in *A Conservative View*; and Robert Harris who in *Activism Without Rhetoric* is considering not only the politics but the social programmes of university youth.

Then come articles by mature men about youth: a sociologist, S.M. Lipset on *Student Activists: A Profile*; two psychiatrists, Wolfgang Lederer on *Speaking of Youth* and Kenneth Keniston on *Youth, Change, and Violence*; a university president, T.M. Hesburgh, CSC, on the character of youth, and portions of a letter stating a practical position for his university after a confrontation; and finally an intellectual of an earlier generation, George Santayana on *America's Young Radicals*. From a global view Philip G. Altbach looks at student activism around the world.

Never before have there been at once so large a proportion of the population under age 25, and so large a proportion of the 18-25 year group freed from economic responsibility in order to study, and proportionately so few adults prepared to instruct college students. So it is natural that the whole society should have an unprecedented interest in the unprecedented predicaments and concerns of college and university youth.

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\* Articles on this subject appeared in the *American Review* in July 1968 and January and April 1969.

## THE BOWSPRIT

Fortunately this does not exclude interest in other aspects of contemporary life. Archibald MacLeish offers four poems and an interview on *The Poet And The Age*; Harold Rosenberg discusses *The Modern Artist and Society*; Clement Greenberg talks about *Art in 1969: One Critic's View*.

Looking backward, Reginald L. Cook analyzes the poetry of Robert Frost in *Robert Frost's Constellated Sky*. And looking outward, Datus C. Smith, Jr., considers what may lie ahead for the developing nations in *Two Revolutions*, one in education and, inter-acting with it, another in communications.

M. C.

## Some Youths Speak

# A VIEW FROM THE LIBERAL-LEFT

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EDWARD SCHWARTZ

*The one long-lived national organization of students up to this time in America is the National Students Association (NSA). It functions through an annual, policy-setting congress to which interested student unions of undergraduate and post-graduate colleges and universities send delegates. Its officers, elected at the congress, are usually post-graduate students who take leave from their studies during their tenure. Though relatively few unions and few students have participated actively, the NSA has been for twenty years the only available "voice of the student"—a prevailingly liberal-left voice.*

*Mr. Schwartz, a student at Brandeis University's School of Social Welfare after graduating from Oberlin College, was President of the NSA in 1967-68. His article, below, does not reflect the happenings of 1969 but does present with unusual clarity the issues as his group sees them.*

AT ALMOST every gathering of elders to which I am invited to speak there is one disconsolate listener who poses the question, "What do you students want, anyway?"

The images which flash before the questioner's mind as he reads of student protest and student power are those of anarchy, promiscuity, and subversion sweeping the land, and the strategic re-

ponse which seems to excite his allegiance is that involving massive retaliation against uppity kids in defence of parental hegemony over their affairs.

Events at Columbia University—where militant students occupied administrative offices for more than a week—and elsewhere have added substance for those who raise these images.

Yet a fair and farsighted appraisal of what students are driving at must encompass not only the broad spectrum of the style of student activism—demon-

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trations, stridency, eccentricity—but also the content of their protest.

What do students want? Or, more precisely, what does the first postwar, post-depression, post-television, post-technology, post-bomb, post-space generation want? Understanding the context in which we move is critical to understanding our present needs.

### *Two Paradoxes*

We have been weaned on two paradoxes: Our affluence enables us to assume less responsibility for our lives than did our parents for theirs in the Depression, but our freedom encourages us to demand more responsibility. The questions which are the most critical to our lives, to the lives of all people, are those over which individual men in a mass society can exercise little control.

The attempt to resolve these paradoxes—of obtaining responsibility in a context of freedom; of asserting power in a climate of powerlessness—has been the central thrust of all major student movements.

There is no single student resolution of the paradoxes. The student community includes many factions, not the least of which is the familiar apathetic middle. Yet within the framework of the paradoxes, certain questions emerge; their answers become the fabric of some generational consensus. The questions are not unfamiliar:

*First*, what is the attitude of the culture toward us?

*Second*, what are the most useful

relationships which we can develop between ourselves and our institutions—family, school, peer group?

*Third*, what role can we students play in social and political affairs?

In general, the questions reflect a desire to expand personal and collective power. How this is expressed, however, varies with the question.

### *Students vs. their Elders*

To begin, how do our elders relate to us? If there is anything which unites students of all persuasions, it is the college administrator or public official who challenges the sense, the responsibility, the interest, or the ability of the student himself.

I have seen college presidents whose political positions were in substantial agreement with those of a student body lose all support from students simply because they talked down to them, or tried to pander to them, or refused to listen to them, or told them to stay in their dormitory rooms and keep quiet.

Conversely, I have seen administrators whose public and political positions differed markedly from those of their students win enormous student support by demonstrating a willingness to take students seriously, to listen to their demands, to present clear statements of disagreement, to convey a sense that they were trying to learn from what the students are saying.

In either case, more than a question of style is involved; it is a matter of attitude. A society which worships youth inevitably will produce people who are

afraid of the young—afraid of not “making it” with the young. The rest is defence—assertions of legal authority, polemical attacks on irresponsibility, snide references to appearance and dress; or, as often, feeble attempts to ingratiate, to play Boy Scout Leader, to use “hip” language which the elder does not really understand.

When a student encounters either specimen of elder, he turns himself off. If the elder is a tyrant, he spawns a revolution; if he becomes a Boy Scout leader, he is ridiculed.

Students, the saying goes, are people, and they want to be treated as such. The elders who “make it” with students are those without hang-ups in dealing with them, those who look upon a student as a potential friend and who are willing to open relationships with students on that basis.

When professors read verbatim from ancient lecture notes, or when they refuse to discuss material with their students, they reinforce an impression that while the professor may care deeply about his subject, he does not care about his students.

What students expect is that some sense of the scholar's enthusiasm for his subject be transmitted in the particular way in which the individual teacher is capable of presenting it. Rightfully, students wonder why people who do not enjoy teaching end up as teachers. The same can be said of student feelings about their administrators. There are certain deans who seem to derive some sort of perverse satisfaction from enforcing rigid social rules completely out of tune with student sentiment. To many

students, the deans seem to have taken their jobs precisely to fill this role.

There are others in college administrations whose counselling reads like a soliloquy of Polonius. These administrators are accorded the disrespect which they so richly deserve.

The deans who win student respect are those who reflect a willingness to move with the times, who possess a sophisticated understanding of the emotional and psychological needs of students, and whose counselling relationships with students involve trying to figure out the direction which they themselves want to take before offering students advice on appropriate ways to move.

#### *Education and Selfhood*

Most students do not view “education” as being simply the time spent memorizing somebody's lectures for an exam. The period between 18 and 23 is fundamentally a time of clarifying who we are, how we behave, what our relationship is to other people, what kinds of responsibility we can handle, what our functional roles can and will be.

Classrooms, at best, are resource banks for this exploration—centres to obtain information; to learn tools of evaluation; to reflect on what others have said about the inherent qualities of nature, man, and society.

Yet the process of integration, of developing selfhood, is the critical process, and we feel that this can proceed only in a climate of personal testing. The university may be a special sort of community, but it is, nonetheless, a community, and we like to feel that we play adult

roles in shaping its environment and policies. Insofar as forces inhibit our freedom, or prevent our participation, opportunities to test our capacities as citizens are lost.

Demanding that option to make our own decisions—and our own mistakes—runs counter to the educational theory which holds that young people are not “ready” to do certain things, are not “ready” to play certain roles. Yet even if we are not “ready”—whatever that means—most of us feel that exclusion from responsibilities is a poor way of encouraging us to accept them.

University administrators often say, “Wait until you leave here.” Yet we know that those who do not demand responsibility at a college level will not demand it later in life, that they will become part of the lumpen proletariat who live out lives “of quiet desperation,” as Henry Thoreau put it.

Consequently, the student power cry is a cry for selfhood. Although the dormitory issues, the curfews, student finances, the independent student press, the boy-girl questions seem trivial issues in their own right, they are important as symbols of areas in our lives which test selfhood and self-expression.

If our power to experiment with our own rules, our own policies, in relation to these questions is limited, then our ability to figure out for ourselves what we will or will not do is limited. The stress involved in this environment is considerable.

Another facet of the battle involves a search for community. Students used to say, “Liberalize rules.” Now they demand, “Let us make the rules.” There is a difference. The former shows no concern

for community decision-making—it is a cry for personal freedom; the latter presumes that the right to make the decision is the goal.

Both demands involve a quest for greater responsibility, but “student power” is much more an existential plea for self-respect and for respect from the establishment.

On those campuses where educational policy has become an issue, invariably the conflict has been between those who confine education to transmission of knowledge, development of analytical skills, and those who view the process as being necessarily broader. When they ask for “relevance” in their education, most students are not demanding a curriculum dealing entirely with current problems or social issues.

What “relevance” means, more often than not, in student curricular theories, is personalization: How does the curriculum fit in with my personality development, with my ability to solve problems, with the questions which I am asking about myself and the world around me? Do professors care about these things?

These concerns spring from classrooms in which students are not challenged, or engaged in the subject, and in which subjects are not related, even peripherally, to human enterprise.

It is useless to tell a young person not to take risks; the essence of our youth, of our sense of defining ourselves, may be the taking of risks, of assuming new roles, of testing ourselves in different environments, of experimenting with new ways of changing others.

The institution of the university is our laboratory for these experiments. It either

accords the space and resources for them, or it does not. When the university does not, we will attempt to free the space for ourselves, even if this means challenging the institution itself.

### *Leap into Politics*

The involvement of students in political and social causes must be seen in this framework as well—that of freeing space for learning and action; of defining rules; of asserting selfhood and responsibility.

When students do make the leap from private concerns to political interest, it generally reflects one of several conditions. For some, it may spring from a successful local drive for student power which "politicizes" its students, which teaches them that authority figures are not sacrosanct, and which shows that they can move to alter their environment.

For others, response to a public figure—a Martin Luther King or a Kennedy—may provide the impetus. For many, a political question which touches their lives—like the draft or tuition fees—might arouse them.

There are few issues which will unite students. Usually, these are a few directly related to personal interests. Most students support lowering the voting age to 18; students have been united around maintenance of free tuition in New Jersey, New York, and California; students oppose state interference in local university affairs and will demonstrate surprising unity when such interference produces loss of university funds, repression of political groups on campus, or bans on speakers.

For the student who himself is engag-

ed in self-definition, the culture's repression of those who do not "toe the middle class line" is seen as directly related to the culture's attitude toward him. This willingness to defend those who deviate from mass opinion creates its own standard for political leadership. The liberal-left knows that dissidents are powerless, but the important criterion is the sustenance of the dissident community, rather than the possibility of real victory.

"Victory" for students is as yet dimly perceived—what victories have been won are local, not national, not adequate. The important point is the integrity of the group, the unity of those who challenge mass life.

### *Leftists vs. Liberals*

The battle between the liberals and the left revolves around this question. After all the rhetoric and ideological bombast, the fellow of the left will tell you that he is dreadfully afraid of becoming "co-opted," of being sucked up by the suburbs, by IBM, by the machine.

He fights this with fervour. Those who "play ball with the system"—who work for candidates, who talk to government officials, who dress up occasionally—he regards as untrustworthy. In the end, the left argues, the liberal will sacrifice his battle for cultural freedom, for himself, the blacks, and the Vietnamese in exchange for a comfortable position in society.

Indeed, the left may feel that the liberal cannot understand the people for whom he presumably fights, since the liberal does not deviate from cultural norms himself. As one radical put it,

## VIEW FROM THE LIBERAL-LEFT

"The liberal fights for other people; the radical fights for himself."

When the debate is applied to specifics, it becomes quite brutal. The left will strive to differentiate itself from the mass; the liberal will try to point out areas within the American tradition which support his case and to build upon them. The left will use confrontation tactics almost on principle, with the goal of "shocking" the mass. The liberal will try to avoid these tactics, almost on principle, from fear of "antagonizing" the mass. The left talks of "destroying" the system; the liberal talks of rebuilding it.

However, neither the left nor the liberal is hardheaded about charting goals and pursuing fluid strategies to achieve them. The ways in which the battle is fought are as important as the battle itself—to both sides.

It is wrong, however, to assume that division between liberal and left revolves simply around questions of identity and tactics. There are differences of goals as well. The liberals are, indeed, products of their own tradition. They are responding to failures of American society to cope with the problems of the cities and with the emerging nations around the world, and hoping for the "right" leadership to influence public policy in the "right" directions.

The left sees America's response to the problems of cities and developing nations as being generically related to America itself—to its culture, its values, its attitudes, which may coerce the majority as effectively as its own minorities, and minorities elsewhere.

If electoral politics seems inadequate to the left, it is because the nature of the

problem which they perceive cannot be solved simply through new leadership; it will involve a transformation of institutions from the ground up.

That the radicals have not found a coherent strategy to effect this transformation reflects as much the nature of the problem as it does their own emotional hang-ups. For some, moreover, outlines of a strategy of long-term organizing in ghettos, universities, suburbs, and corporations are developing, which might pull the liberal community along with it.

These, then, are the concerns—developing relationships with adults based on attitudes of mutual respect; developing communities of learning in which people's ability to act and experience is deemed as important to growth as their ability to absorb information and to decide; and developing a tolerance for cultural pluralism in this country, and abroad.

While the issues—as well as the tactics—vary from year to year, the themes have been constant, and probably will remain so as long as our mass institutions remain mass.

At the outset of this commentary, I cited the two paradoxes—of obtaining responsibility in a context of freedom; of asserting power in a context of powerlessness—as being central to the student demands of the 1960s. I have not even used the traditional terms of liberalism—jobs, education, housing, welfare—because these are not the problems.

The problems are deeper than that, involving the structure and values of mass culture, and if we cry out, it is because the beast is difficult to move. Whether it will be moved depends on our ability to speak, and of the society to hear.

## Some Youths Speak

# THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

---

ARNOLD STEINBERG

*Recently and perhaps still a student at George Washington University, Mr. Steinberg is editor of "The New Guard," a monthly publication of the conservative youth organization, Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). Unlike the National Students Association which represents student bodies, YAF is composed of individual students who share conservative political-economic views and support the conservative wing of the Republican Party.*

BECAUSE THEIR extreme views and spectacular tactics attract heavy coverage by the news media, the activists known as the New Left have received public attention totally out of proportion to their small numbers. Many more students are equally aware of the problems faced by the university and society; but, because they are more interested in solutions than slogans and because they avoid disruptive tactics, they have been less visible to the larger public.

In my view, the New Left challenges two central premises of civilized society. The first is the idea of rationality, the use of reason and dispassionate analysis in dealing with public issues. The second is the idea of order, because order provides the environment of security, confidence

and continuity in which progress is possible.

These two premises are complementary: dispassionate analysis is only possible within an orderly context. If reason should prevail anywhere, it should be in the university, but the university is now under attack by the New Left.

Real problems surely have played a part in inspiring the student unrest we witness in the United States and around the world. But those of us who subscribe to the two premises noted above resist the temptation to exploit these problems, either for emotional release, or to stir revolutionary fervour.

History is replete with examples of revolutionary utopias far worse than the evils they sought to correct. Impetuosity

## THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

does not solve problems, it complicates matters.

Students, including myself, tend to be impatient. We apply a hard test: we want palpable results, and we want them now. We insist on candour, and we condemn hypocrisy. Indeed, we threaten vested interests in public and private sectors when we demand that past mistakes be both acknowledged and corrected. The New Left incorporates these attributes of student unrest, but it also indulges in a sophisticated and articulate temper tantrum. Its leaders recite problems, but they do not propose solutions. The whole "system" must go, they say; democracy does not work.

### *Democracy and Elites*

In fact, it appears that democracy works *too well* for some New Leftists. For example, at New York's Columbia University, three-fourths of the student community favoured a policy of "open recruiting": permitting prospective employers on campus to interview students interested in the jobs available after graduation.

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the leading New Left organization, insisted that those corporations it disapproved of had no right to interview students on campus. Because the democratic verdict conflicted with SDS policy, the organization resorted to violence, in an effort to deny students the right of access to these interviews.

Professor Herbert Marcuse of the University of California is a philosopher often quoted by New Left leaders. Marcuse has explicitly called for the denial of

free speech to individuals and groups in society to which he takes objection. He postulates an elitist society, in which the majority is moulded to fit the prescription recommended by an elite. Naturally, the New Left leaders plan on being part of that elite.

Thus the New Left is guilty of precisely the evils it attributes to the Establishment, which it criticizes for exerting centralized control. SDS spokesmen have argued for "participatory democracy" by which they mean "the sharing of decision-making by those affected." In action, however, New Left leaders take decision-making power into their own hands.

New Left leaders have embraced the idea of "confrontation politics," manifested physically in police-student battles. Their strategy is to convert dissatisfied, non-revolutionary students into active revolutionaries. They do this by creating disorderly situations, so that an indecisive and procrastinating university administration is forced ultimately to call in the police.

This outcome is precisely what the New Left leaders want. By provoking clashes with the police, followed by jailing and lengthy court procedures, they hope to "radicalize" the uncommitted or semi-committed students.

A typical tactic of such "confrontation politics" might involve the use of relatively nonviolent students to conduct a "sit-in" in a university building. The students are ordered to disperse and they refuse, hoping to be carried out. The police move into the crowded room, and a hardcore New Leftist attacks a policeman, who in turn clubs the attacker.

Imagine yourself in this room, a

middle-class youth, whose contact with the police has probably been limited to traffic violations. You witness not the provocation, but only the subsequent clubbing. You and the others in the room panic, a melee ensues, and you and everyone else are clubbed.

#### *A Problem of Ethics*

Confrontation politics poses a serious ethical question: the exploitation by revolutionaries of sincere and idealistic youth, many of whom are more interested in improving conditions than in overturning the existing order. But an even deeper question is involved: is the imposition of *any* ideological solidarity on students justifiable?

Students, like society, represent diversified interests and views. Indeed, students, unlike many other groups in society (such as workers in the same occupation), share their role for only a *temporary* period. The student status is a transitional one. Those who claim to be spokesmen for students or for "student opinion" should be suspect, and those who seek to impose a revolutionary ethos on students are capitalizing on the idealism and limited experience of the most vulnerable group in society.

Finally, why should students who pursue scholarship be vilified by those whose only function appears to be the creation of a disorder which makes scholarship difficult, if not impossible?

When one understands that the New Left is interested in creating a revolutionary climate in which violence is a logical necessity, rather than in solving pressing social problems, *then* one sees the relevance of the two premises I stated at the outset.

Most New Left leaders are from upper-middle class families who subsidize their children's revolutionary exploits with generous allowances. Typically, New Left leaders have had limited or no contact with the segments of society for which they claim empathy.

The "poor," the "deprived," are to them sociological phenomena, abstract victims of a cruel society. Themselves products of sheltered life situations, free of financial responsibility, and committed to revolution—these militants do not accept the necessity for order, because their own lives are not ordered, nor the idea that the university is a place for rational discourse in the search for truth, because they have already found the final truths.

It is ironic that the New Left, which has so articulately dissected the hypocrisy of society, has proven to be hypocritical itself in so many areas. New Leftists criticize society for de-emphasizing individualism. Yet they regard the free choice of individuals as inefficient, because "bad" choices are made.

They plead that peaceful dissent should be allowed (as it should), but then espouse the proscription of dissent when *they* take over. Their leaders are ostensibly wary of concentrations of power. In fact, they do not oppose power *per se*, but only power in the hands of others.

Even within the New Left movement itself, there is a good deal of evidence that small groups decide on programme and actions and impose their decisions on the rank and file who are usually, unlike the leaders, more interested in reform than in

revolution:

### *The True Radicals*

New Left leaders label themselves "radicals." But the word means going to the root of a problem, and these students, when they posit solutions at all, evade the real sources of the problems. For example, they criticize centralization, yet the social welfare proposals they occasionally advance would concentrate more power in the central government.

The true radicals are found among the libertarian-conservatives, who accept certain positive values to guide their search for a better society. We value the individual and the preservation of his identity, and we insist on maximum individual freedom, consistent with the preservation of society.

Progress results primarily from individual action, not from the state. Thus the founding document of Young Americans for Freedom states: "The market economy, allocating resources by the free play of supply and demand, is the simple economic system compatible with the requirements of personal freedom and constitutional government, and...is at the same time the most productive supplier of human needs."

In the United States a vast array of civic groups, fraternal groups, churches, foundations and other private organizations comprise the *independent* sector. These groups have done much to solve the nation's problems and, given common objectives and realistic suggestions for common action, they can do more.

Already, many foundations are working with corporations to cut down risk in

financing black entrepreneurship in the ghettos. The nation's older citizens, affluent but idle, are prepared to offer their counsel and skills, their business knowledge, to those in need. Foundations can underwrite the risk of projects, and financial institutions and corporations will provide the capital.

Indeed, the corporate planners for whom the New Left has such contempt are now the most aggressive elements pushing for systematized solutions of social problems, including training the jobless for productive roles in society, or finding new ways to efficiently and inexpensively replace or remodel slum housing. Thus many so-called "reactionary" businessmen are the real radicals, for they proceed efficiently to the roots of our problems.

### *Conservatives and the Status Quo*

Conservative students like myself are not apologists for the status quo. We abhor at least as much as the New Leftists do the growing centralization and bureaucratization of society, and the accompanying decline of individualism. The remnants of poverty and racism in our society, we suggest, can be eliminated, but only by providing the leadership to mobilize the good faith of people.

In addition, we recognize that self-interest is also part of human nature and if we can make it profitable for business to retrain the poor, to better house the poor, then we shall have greater employment and better housing.

Conservatives have argued, for example, that tax-credits or rebates can encourage corporations to train the jobless,

or to develop depressed areas. Tax-credit can even be used to increase the supply of competent teachers in urban schools. Our aim is to minimize the role of the public sector and, at the same time, to solve social problems.

As for liberals, we are not too fond of them and their reliance on the state. But we share with them a belief in the rules of fair play, in civility, in free speech and other elemental rights. We share with them a notion of what is constructive and what is destructive. We both want to solve problems, not agitate for revolution. Thus we have often allied with liberals in pursuit of common aims and in opposition to the tactics of the New Left.

Despite our belief in working within the system, we conservatives offer revolutionary *ideas*, and we suggest that government intervention is more often the cause, rather than the cure, of many of our problems. We place greater stress than the liberals on organic change, based on tradition, continuity and development of values, as opposed to rash, ill-considered change, and moral relativism.

#### *Reforming the University*

We are very close to the university problems, because we are students. Here we see the effects of the liberal emphasis on egalitarianism, the public sector, and collective influence. Universities are too big, too impersonal, and too many people get too little out of their education. Government and education are too closely connected. There is not enough freedom on campus. Education is of limited relevance, and instructors often do not teach.

I may sound like a member of the New Left, but the difference is that I do not simply cite obvious problems. I recognize for example, that academic freedom requires order and mutual respect of their rights by the students and the administration. Freedom means also the right to disagree—with the government, the university, or, if I may be so bold, with the New Left.

I would support a new approach to higher education. Public universities should be sold. If the state finds subsidization of higher education worthwhile, it should establish minimum scholarship standards and subsidize students according to need. These funds would be used for education at an accredited institution of the student's *choice*.

This idea, here summarized too briefly to convey its complexity and daring, was advanced by Professor Milton Friedman, the noted conservative economist at the University of Chicago.

This idea, like other bold but untried proposals advanced by conservatives, reflects disenchantment with the Establishment. We conservatives have proposals for improving urban living and race relations, providing increased job opportunities and better housing, etc. Such proposals challenge vested interests, both philosophical and material. They embody a predisposition, a valued judgement, in favour of *freedom*.

To me, this is the cause and the course of the true radical. I believe that an orderly, decentralized, democratic society has a far better chance of meeting 20th century problems with creative innovation than the totalitarian rule of a self-appointed elite.

## Some Youths Speak

# ACTIVISM WITHOUT RHETORIC

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ROBERT HARRIS

*Like most student activists, be they radical, liberal, or conservative, Mr. Harris majored in social science. In the following article he describes practical efforts of students at his institution, Michigan State University, to bring about desired changes.*

*With variations in specific illustrations, his description would be valid for very many other American colleges and universities since the mid-1950s (and also in the 1920s). These activities continue on a large scale, although in recent years other groups using the tactics of confrontation or violence have made the headlines.*

THE TERM "student activist" is an ambiguous one. It has generally been applied to the radicals or militants who have been the spearheads of violent confrontations with administrators and police at Berkeley, Columbia and other universities.

Self-righteous in philosophy, nihilistic in tactics; talking of "destroying society in order to rebuild it," these radicals have channelled their "activism" into sensational, headline-catching demonstrations. They are, by general consensus and their own admission, a very small minority of the student population.

There is, however, another larger group of activists on U.S. university campuses, who are equally committed to

changing society and righting injustices.

Unlike the militants, these student activists believe that the best way to achieve needed changes is not to destroy the system—which has proved flexible and open to reform—but to work within it by non-violent and legal means. In their quiet way, these students have done more than the others to initiate tangible and useful change both on and off the campus.

Two major figures symbolize the ideals and tactics of these pragmatic student activists. One is John F. Kennedy who issued a challenge in his 1961 Inaugural Address that seemed to be aimed specifically at youth: "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you

can do for your country." The response to President Kennedy's appeal was most dramatically illustrated in the enthusiasm with which young people greeted the idea of the Peace Corps.

The other figure to inspire the activists was Dr. Martin Luther King, whose unswerving commitment to non-violence in the struggle for civil rights emphasized the connection between means and ends.

#### *Students as Tutors*

When civil rights leaders pointed to education as one of the long-term solutions to breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and lack of training for jobs, the student activists—as distinguished from the radicals—responded. They turned to the urban ghettos, the rural poverty pockets, the families of migrant farm-labourers, and gave spare hours, days, even summer vacations to help the educationally-deprived.

At my own school, Michigan State University, more than 1,000 students are currently volunteering their time for a variety of services:

1. They provide teacher assistants to five area school systems; these volunteers assume part of the regular teachers' workload, and offer personal attention to needy pupils.

2. During the summer vacation, they provide remedial and tutorial services to the incoming freshmen at the predominantly Negro Rust College in Mississippi to prepare them for college-level studies. The volunteers work during the school year to raise the money for their own expenses, and to pay room and board for the entire freshman class at a special six-

week summer session.

3. They offer free tutoring services and counselling for youth of high school age; they supervise recreation activities at local community centres to provide a gathering place for neighbourhood youngsters and to try to bring back into the schools "drop-outs" discouraged by lack of preparation and motivation.

4. They work in juvenile courts as guidance counsellors and academic tutors for youngsters who have come in conflict with the law; both the courts and the parents of young offenders have been impressed by the ability of university students to establish rapport with juvenile delinquents.

5. They tutor students admitted to the university under a special programme—mainly Negro students from low socio-economic areas who have the desire and capacity for college work, but need extra help to overcome their educational handicaps.

6. A number of student groups have each "adopted" a class from one of the inner-city schools; they take the children on field trips to museums and theatres or on recreation outings, in an effort to enlarge their social and cultural experience and create motivation that will improve their school work.

7. Students conduct door-to-door surveys in the inner-city to determine the residents' legal needs, and to provide information about free legal services available.

The "side effects" of these programmes, and hundreds like them at other universities, may be nearly as beneficial as the programmes themselves. For many of the volunteers—who come largely from

middle-class suburban homes—these experiences represent their first exposure to the realities of urban or rural poverty.

Many of them have changed their career goals to such fields as urban studies or psychiatric social work in order to continue their work for constructive social change. Others maintain their previous professional goals, but plan nevertheless to continue their personal involvement in social causes after they leave the university environment.

### *Politics off Campus*

The election of 1968 was the first time that massive numbers of young people—more than 500,000, by some estimates—had been involved in presidential politics. The student effort in support of Senator Eugene McCarthy's candidacy quickly spread to Robert Kennedy's campaign, and later to Nelson Rockefeller's effort to secure the Republican nomination.

Thousands of student activists travelled hundreds of miles, to New Hampshire, to Indiana, to Oregon, to campaign for their candidates. Although their candidates did not ultimately win, this involvement heralded a new day in American politics.

Student support of Eugene McCarthy, and his consequent "moral" victory in the New Hampshire primary election, was instrumental in the decision of Lyndon Johnson to withdraw from the campaign. Student attempts to "open" the party conventions more fully brought the issue of democratic participation to the conscience of the American public.

Perhaps the most important consequence of student involvement in day-to-

day politics was a slight narrowing of the generation gap. Working side by side on the campaigns, students and adults gained new respect for each other. Students learned that you *can* trust some people over 30; adults learned that this generation is ready to make a meaningful contribution *now*.

As they canvassed door-to-door asking for votes, student activists stopped, and listened, and they learned that the people labelled "white middle-class racists" by the radicals were in most cases not so much prejudiced against Negroes as worried about their homes and jobs and their children's education, based on inadequate and sensationalized information. They discovered that many of these people were open to new information and new ideas if they were approached in good faith and without hostility.

### *Student Power*

Off campus, active participation by students in politics was encouraged; immediate help was needed, and anyone willing and able to give it was welcomed. On campus, however, the prevailing attitudes of many administrators discouraged students from participating in university decision-making, even when the decisions profoundly affected the students' daily lives.

Where administrators were responsive, as on many progressive campuses, students have in recent years acquired greater control over their non-academic activities, such as housing regulations in dormitories, rules for student conduct, and the like.

In the area of academic affairs, ad-

ministrators and faculty have been slower to grant students a voice in decision-making. But student persistence and initiative, pursued without rhetoric or confrontation, have brought results. Here again I cite the case of Michigan State University; there have been similar developments at other universities.

In 1966, the student government at Michigan State decided that it would be useful to students, and to faculty and administration as well, to collect student evaluations of courses and teachers and to make these available to the entire university community.

Many of the faculty responded critically, claiming that students were unqualified to evaluate teachers or courses. However, as the students proceeded, making every effort to be objective and learning from the evaluation programmes initiated at other colleges, faculty opinion became more receptive, although some criticism persisted.

The final result, a yearly evaluation,

has become part of the university's internal life, useful to students in choosing courses, useful to faculty and administrators in evaluating their own effectiveness as well as the relevance of certain courses.

This kind of student involvement in academic life has reminded many administrators and professors that the universities have a responsibility to set an example in democratic procedures by encouraging the participation of all elements of the community in those decisions which affect them.

They have learned too that this kind of practical experience in decision-making may be as relevant to a student's education as lectures and textbooks. Perhaps most important, the universities are learning that they must let young people know that the force of reason—not violence—will prevail. Every time an administrator, or a politician, closes the door to responsible participation, he is encouraging other, less responsible forms of action.

## Some Elders Speak

# STUDENT ACTIVISTS : A PROFILE

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SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET

*Dr. Lipset, Professor of Sociology at Harvard University, has been studying youth movements around the world. This has led to two collections of essays, "Student Politics" and "Students and Politics in Comparative Perspective." He is the author, also, of "Political Man," "The First New Nation," and "Revolution and Counter Revolution."*

*The following article appeared, in part, in the Fall, 1968 issue of "The Public Interest" and in "Student Politics and Higher Education in the United States: a Selected Bibliography."*

WHY HAVE politically oriented students in the United States become particularly sensitive to social issues in the 1960's when relatively few of these students had been actively involved in the two preceding decades? Anyone seeking to account for the rise of U.S. student activism is faced with the fact that he is obviously dealing with a worldwide phenomenon.

This in turn suggests that the explanation will be related to the changing international picture, and that the sources of political activism among students are essentially to be found in the changing worldwide climate of political opinion.

During the 1940's and early 1950's the Western world was concerned with the expansionist tendencies of totalitarian systems, fascist and communist. In the face of these threats, many intellectuals turned from their accustomed critical stance to defend the fundamental character of their societies as moral and decent against the totalitarian critics. Thus for a time ideological controversy within the democratic countries declined.

From 1956 on, however, with the revelation that the post-Stalinist Communist world was itself ridden with dissension, much of the political rationale for domestic consensus based on anti-totalitarianism began to disappear. This change facilitated a rise of domestic

criticism by those groups in the West that normally press their societies to live up to their ideals.

Students, who tend to accept the stated ideals of their societies in a more absolute fashion than their elders, were among the first to become involved in this reorientation. Here in the United States, student opposition first arose around the issue of civil rights—the supremely moral issue of American society, in that it centres on manifest violations of the American egalitarian creed.

To the activist young who came to political consciousness in the late 1950's and early 1960's the gap between their sense of what ought to be and what actually existed seemed enormous. They took for granted the existing structure, including the far-reaching new laws and court decisions in support of civil rights, and reacted with outrage against continued evidence of Negro deprivation.

While older liberals, white and black, took some pride in recent progress achieved through legal, peaceful efforts, young activists regarded the gains as empty gestures.

Negro college students—who now number over 300,000—increasingly supported the cry for black power; on university campuses they demanded recruitment of more Negro students and faculty and a curriculum that prominently featured Afro-American history and experience.

#### *Generational Split*

Conflict over the pace of reform also divided the liberal-left communities along generational lines. Those who were older had learned from experience that revo-

lutions—even when initiated with the purest aims and most democratic slogans—could lead to totalitarianism, to new forms of exploitation. To many young militants, such warnings sounded like attempts to justify unacceptable aspects of the status quo.

A split between generations could be observed again in the spread of opposition to the Vietnam war, an issue that became dominant in student activism in many countries. To many Americans in the older age groups, Vietnam was but the most recent episode in a two-decade long struggle against Communist expansion. For those students inclined to the left—who knew not Stalin, the Hungarian Revolution, or the Berlin Wall—the Vietnam issue became defined in terms that placed American actions at odds with a basic democratic belief: the right to self-determination of politically weak peoples.

Unlike the student movements of the 1930's, which were linked to adult political parties, the dominant ones of the present constitute a genuine youth rebellion, directed almost as much against the major parties of the left, and the Soviet Union, as it is against the moderates and conservatives.

#### *Why Students?*

Student activists today appear ready to attack all existing institutions, including the university, and to use tactics which alienate the majority, in order to show their contempt for the "intolerable" world created by their elders. Their slight concern with the immediate consequences of their actions also characterizes student groups in Japan, France, Germany and

many other countries.

Students have almost invariably been more responsive to political trends, to changes in mood, to opportunities for social change than any other group in the population, except possibly intellectuals. As a result students have often played a major role in stimulating unrest and fostering change in many countries.

The special role of students has been particularly noted in the West European Revolutions of 1848, in the Russian revolutionary movement, which was largely a student one until 1905, in the various Chinese movements during the first quarter of the 20th century, in the different fascist movements in Italy, Germany and Spain, before they took power, in a host of colonial and developing states, and in various Communist countries since 1956.

Awareness of the important role of students has led scholars to detail those general aspects of the students' situation which press them to act politically.

First there are the frustrating elements in the student role. Students are, by occupation, marginal men. They are in transition between dependence on their families for income, status and various forms of security—and taking up their own roles in jobs and families. Student-hood is inherently a tension-creating period.

In the United States, the rapid growth in the number of students (seven million today as compared with one and a half-million in 1940) means both that the composition of the college population, as a group, has come increasingly from less privileged families, and that the value of a college degree for status placement has declined. Young people in a society in which education tends to determine how

well they start in the struggle for place, find themselves facing a highly competitive situation.

The idealism of youth is another stimulating factor. There is a maxim which exists in various forms in many countries: "He who is not a radical at 20 does not have a heart; he who still is one at 40 does not have a head." This statement is usually interpreted as a conservative one, assuming radicalism is an unintelligent response to politics.

But the first part of the saying may be even more important than the second, for it denotes a social expectation that young people *should* be radicals, that the older generation believes that youthful radicalism is praiseworthy behaviour. The emphasis on youthful reformism is even greater in the United States than in many other countries, for American culture places a premium on being youthful and on the opinions of youth.

Many American adults are reluctant, even when they consciously disagree, to call students or youth to task sharply. They may encourage youth and students to take independent new positions, rather than emphasize the worth of experience.

This ties in with the part of the American self-image which assumes that the United States is a progressive country, one which accepts reform and change. And the truism that the youth will inherit the future is linked with the sense that the youth are the bearers of the progressive ideas which will dominate the future.

The real world, of course, necessarily deviates considerably from the ideal, and part of the process of maturing is to learn to operate in a world of conflicting values, roles, interests and demands. Such

compromises as this requires are viewed by youth as violations of basic morality.

Students tend, as Max Weber suggested, to develop an ethic of "absolute ends" rather than of "responsibility." They tend to be committed to ideals rather than institutions. Hence, those events which point up the gap between ideals and reality stimulate them to action.

### *Influence of the Faculty\**

Although the student protest is directed against much of the adult world, including the university faculty, it is important to note that changes in the backgrounds and the opinions of increasing numbers of faculty members undoubtedly have had considerable impact on their students.

The modern American university has in recent years become a place of assembly and major occupational outlet for many of the brightest people who seek to be innovative, who wish to be free of the ideological restrictions and materialistic commitments that they believe are inherent in the corporate and professional worlds. It is an institution where "liberalism" in politics and "modernism" in culture are elements of an established, if unofficial, *Weltanschauung* (world outlook).

But if faculty helps to create a climate of opinion that encourages students to move to "the left," it is ironic that some of the sources of student malaise stem from the fact that changes in the role of this very faculty have contributed to

making the situation of being a student less attractive than it once was.

With increasing size and greater pressures on faculty to do research, publish, and take part in "public service" activities, the faculty at leading institutions increasingly gives a larger proportion of its ever more limited teaching time to post-graduate research students, and pays relatively little attention to undergraduates. So, in an odd way, the emergence of the university as a major liberal institution of our society has *reduced* the informal influence of faculty on students within the university, as compared with 30 or 40 years ago.

This development is not simply or even principally a function of the growth of the university. It reflects even more the increased "professionalization" of the faculty, the extent to which "teaching" as such has declined as the main identification of the role of being a professor.

The changes in the role of the faculty, its increased involvement in a national prestige system (based on evaluations of scholarly achievements and extramural activities), a sharp increase in income, and a decline in teaching obligations have not necessarily made for a "happier" professoriate.

Faculty, like students, are in an increasingly competitive situation, one in which men see themselves being constantly judged as to their local and national positions. While some succeed in becoming nationally recognized figures, most faculty necessarily do not achieve any such elevated scholarly status.

With the depreciation of the teaching function as a local source of economic reward and status, many who have lost

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"Faculty" in American English means the collective academic staff.

## STUDENT ACTIVISTS

out in the competition within their own generation—or who, if successful, fear or actually see younger men coming up and securing the status they once had—become deeply dissatisfied and anxious.

Hence, many professors find solace in student militancy directed against the forces they hold responsible for the faculty's felt sense of status inferiority or insecurity. The same faculty that demand and secure lower teaching loads often tell their students that they are neglected and misused by the administration and trustees.

### *A Separate Culture?*

The demand for "student power," for increased influence by students over the decision-making process in the university, tends on the whole to be raised by left-wing activist groups. The receptivity which this demand secures in wider circles may reflect a heightened sense within the campus community that the university demands more, yet gives less, to both student and faculty member. Thus, as in the case of employees in a bureaucratized industry, a sort of student syndicalism would seem to be emerging, which seeks to regain for students as a group the influence which they have lost individually.

It may also be argued that student activism is the most recent expression of the need of youth to have a separate culture. The student stratum, as such, has always tended to create an array of age-group symbols which set it apart from other social strata and from adults in particular.

Changes in the political role of the

university increasingly make politics a crucial source of self-expression. Though the institution itself may be non-partisan, professors take ever-growing roles as party activists, commentators, advisers, consultants, and researchers on policy matters. Many students thus find themselves in centres of great political significance, but with little or no share in the political status of the institution.

In addition, although most faculty political involvement in the United States tends toward the left, it still occurs within the "establishment." If student politics is to express a sense of separate identity, as part of the student culture, it must be outside of, and in opposition to, the politics of most of the adults.

It remains true that the majority of the students in all countries are politically quiescent and moderate in their views. According to national surveys of student opinion taken by the Harris Poll in 1965 and the Gallup Poll in 1968, approximately one-fifth of American students have participated in civil rights or political activities.

The radical activist groups generally have tiny memberships. Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) claims a total membership of about 30,000 out of a national student body of seven million of which about 6,000 pay national dues. A Harris Poll of American students taken in the spring of 1968 estimates that there are about 100,000 radical activists, or somewhere between one and two per cent of the college population. Given that the activists are such a small minority, the questions must be raised: who are they? and what factors contribute to activist strength?

The major conclusion to be drawn from a large number of studies in the United States and other countries is that left-wing students are largely the children of left-wing or liberal parents. The activists are more radical than their parents; but both parents and children are located on the same side of the political spectrum.

Similarly, studies of conservative student groups, such as the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF), indicate that their members are largely from right-wing backgrounds. Students are more "idealistic" and "committed" than their parents—but generally in the same direction.

#### *Academic Disciplines and Politics*

Intellectuals, academics, writers, musicians, and so forth in the United States tend as a group to be disproportionately liberal or leftist. And studies of student populations suggest that students who identify themselves as "intellectuals," or who aspire to intellectual pursuits after graduation, are also likely to be on the left and favourable to activism.

Among faculty and students, there are clear-cut correlations between academic disciplines and political orientations. On the whole, those involved in the humanities and the social sciences, or in the pure theoretical fields of science, are more likely to be on the left than those in the more practical, applied, or experimental fields.

Studies of entering first-year students show the same relationships between their intended fields of study and their political attitudes as are found among seniors, post-graduate students and faculty. Thus the variations noted above appear to be the

result of tendencies established before the student arrives at the university.

#### *Influence of Social Backgrounds*

The relationships between academic fields and political sympathies are linked to the finding that the leftist activists within American universities tend to come from relatively well-to-do backgrounds as compared to the student population generally. A comparison by Braungart and Westby of the delegates to conventions of SDS (the leftist Students for a Democratic Society) and YAF (a conservative group) indicated further that the left-wingers come from somewhat more affluent backgrounds than the rightists. The majority of the latter are children of conservative businessmen and professionals, but a significant proportion (one-fifth to one-third) come from working-class origins, a group almost unrepresented among the SDS delegates.

In general, studies of the social backgrounds of students in different disciplines suggest that those who major in the liberal arts subjects and have an intellectual or scholarly bent have well-educated parents, whereas first-generation college students of lowly origins tend to be vocationally oriented in a narrow sense, and are more likely to be found among those preparing to become engineers, businessmen, and the like. Their strong concentration on professional objectives, plus the need of many of them to hold a job during the school term, often results in their being less available for political activities than those from more privileged families.

These findings may help to explain

## STUDENT ACTIVISTS

why colleges attended by large numbers of less well-to-do students are less likely to be strongholds of left-wing groups than those that educate the scions of the upper middle class.

Black students, of course, constitute a major exception to the pattern of political passivity, or conservatism, among students of relatively deprived backgrounds. They have been among the major forces initiating sit-ins at schools as diverse and separated as San Francisco State College, Columbia, Boston, and Northwestern universities, and at many predominantly Negro institutions as well.

However, as Professor Charles Hamilton has pointed out, black-student protest differs considerably from that of the more affluent white radicals in that the politics of the black activist is much more *instrumental*, directed toward realistic, achievable goals, whereas that of the white activist is inclined to be *expressive*, more oriented toward showing up the "immorality" of the larger society than to securing attainable reforms.

### *University Traditions*

In stressing that involvement in leftist student activism is a function of the general political orientation which students bring to the university, I do not mean that changes in attitude do not occur. Universities clearly do have a liberalizing effect, so that there is a gradual shift to the left. If we hold pre-university orientation constant, it obviously will make a difference what subjects a student decides to major in, who his friends are on the campus, what his relations are with his

teachers of varying political persuasions, what particular extracurricular activities he happens to get involved in, and the like.

High-level liberal arts colleges with an intellectual aura attract students oriented to becoming intellectuals. This may account for the pattern of student protest at such important small schools as Reed College in Oregon, Swarthmore in Pennsylvania, and Antioch in Ohio.

The best state universities, as judged in terms of faculty scholarly prominence —e.g., California, Michigan, and Wisconsin—are also schools which have become the most important centres of "confrontationist" politics. They attract a disproportionate number of intellectually oriented students.

Alexander Astin of the American Council of Education has recently presented evidence that the variations in the amount of student activism at different universities is a function of the type of students who attend, rather than such attributes of the schools as size, administrative policy, etc. Dr. Astin collected questionnaire data from 35,000 students at 226 different institutions, indicating that when the politically relevant traits of students are held constant, there is little difference in the amount of protest among different types of institutions. That is, the variation among schools seems to be largely the result of the type of student whom they attract.

The political traditions and images of certain universities also may play an important role in determining the orientations of their students and faculty. In the United States, Madison (University of Wisconsin) and Berkeley (University

of California) have maintained a fairly long record as centres of radicalism.

The Wisconsin image goes back to before World War I, when the strength of Progressive and Socialist politics in the state contributed to the university's political aura. The San Francisco Bay area, including Berkeley, has a history, dating back to the turn of the century, as one of the most liberal-left communities in the nation.

There is also a special aspect of university life which makes it more likely that certain groups of students will find satisfaction in intense political experience. Various studies suggest that mobility, particularly geographic mobility, where one becomes a stranger in an unfamiliar social context, is conducive to making individuals available for causes that invoke intense commitment. Thus, new students, or recent transfers, are more likely to be politically active than others.

#### *Personality and Politics*

Some of the recent research by psychologists seeks to go beyond the analysis of factors which seem to have a direct impact on political choice. They have also sought to account for political orientation and degrees of involvement by examining personality traits.

Thus, they have looked at such factors as variation in the way different groups of students have been reared by their parents, i.e., in a permissive or authoritarian atmosphere, as well as investigating family relationships, student intelligence, sociability, and the like. Such studies have reported interesting and relatively consistent differences between the minority

of student activists and the rest of the student population.

For example, they report that leftist activists tend to be the offspring of permissive families as judged by child-rearing practices, and of families characterized by a strong mother who dominates family life and decisions. Conversely, conservative activists tend to come from families with more strict relationships between parents and children, and in which the father plays a dominant controlling role.

At the moment, however, these findings are unconvincing, in large part because the extant studies do not hold constant the sociological and politically relevant factors in the backgrounds of the students. Childhood rearing practices clearly tend to be linked to social-cultural-political outlooks. But to prove that they play an independent role in determining the political choices of students, it will first be necessary to compare students *within* similar ethnic, religious, and political-cultural environments. This has not yet been done.

In evaluating the growing body of research on the characteristics of leftist activists by psychologists, it is important to note whether these activists are being compared with other activists or, as often is done, with data from the bulk of the student population, that is, the passive majority.

Leftist activists should properly be compared with conservative activists, and with those involved in nonpolitical forms of campus activity. The limited efforts in these directions indicate that some of the characteristics which have been identified as those of leftist activists, such as greater intelligence, characterize the in-

## STUDENT ACTIVISTS

volved generally. Both leftist and conservative activists, as well as moderates involved in student government, are drawn from the ranks of the academically talented in the United States.

Efforts that concentrate primarily on activists, in order to distinguish among the social and psychological traits of students of different political persuasions, also present special analytical problems, since the degree to which students direct their extracurricular energies into politics is itself strongly linked to their political orientations. Studies of student bodies in different countries indicate that those on the left generally (and the small group on the extreme right) view politics as an appropriate and even necessary university activity.

Committed to the need for major social change, leftists feel that the university should be an agency for such changes, and that both they and their professors should devote a considerable portion of their activities to politics.

Conversely, however, the less leftist students are, the more likely they are to disagree with this view, the more prone they will be to feel that the university should be an apolitical "house of study." Liberals and leftists, therefore, are much more likely to be politically active than

moderates and conservatives.

This means that, on any given campus, or in any country, the visible forms of student politics will suggest that the student population as a whole is more liberal or radical leftist than it actually is. Since conservative academic ideology fosters campus political passivity, one should not expect to find much conservative activity among students, and the absence of such activity need not signify the absence of a conservative temper among some, or perhaps many, students.

No society should find it remarkable that a visible proportion of its student population is actively involved in politics. The circumstance of their being a "privileged" group which gives them the psychic security to act is one of the factors which makes their activism possible.

It may be argued that a politically inert student population is cause for greater misgivings than an active one. There is a serious danger, however, that indiscriminate use of violence and disruption by students and others could result in undermining democratic processes and encouraging other aggrieved minorities (including the military) to take the law and power into their own hands whenever they feel politically frustrated.

## Some Elders Speak

# SPEAKING OF YOUTH

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WOLFGANG LEDERER

*A psychiatrist in private practice in San Francisco and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, Dr. Lederer makes a distinction between rebels, be they white student activists or Black Militants, and delinquents or hippies—a thesis accepted by most psychiatrists and psychologists—and attempts to explain the genesis of each, ending with a bit of advice to the middle-aged.*

SPEAKING OF YOUTH: One hardly knows what to complain of first. Barely have we settled it that today's youngsters are alienated, bent only on dropping out or picking daisies, separated from us and our middle age by the famous "gap"—barely have we agreed on all this when here come some of these same youngsters storming right across the unbridgeable, occupying universities, sparking political campaigns, and being involved indeed.

What is one to think of it?

As a psychiatrist, I, like my colleagues, have had to think of it quite a bit. In our offices flower children droop from whatever they were last high on, revolutionaries assail our supposedly lacking social

conscience, and parents, having vented a mixture of anger, grief, envy, and contempt against their offspring, end up by asking: "Doctor, what have we done wrong?"

What, if anything, have parents done wrong?

Obviously, this is an important question, and one properly within the competence of my profession. But, as usual, there is no professional agreement as to the answer. The views which follow are strictly mine—though similar ones are held by a growing number of my colleagues.

### *A Generational Gap?*

To begin with: There is no overall "generation gap." It is a good, catchy

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slogan, but the truth is that some kids are hard to reach or altogether out of touch, and others communicate beautifully.

And further: The daisy-pickers and the revolutionaries are not the same youngsters at all, but each a totally different breed of cat from the other, regardless of external resemblance.

And finally: There is nothing new under the sun.

For, surely, the times have always been changing. There has not been a generation which has not deplored the precipitous decay of old mores. There may have been a spectacular speed-up of technological development in our time, but it is not the mastery of tools which causes problems.

It is the use to which the tools are to be put which has always been puzzling: Shall the adz, the army, the atom be used to dig an irrigation ditch—or a grave? This has always been the problem, and is the problem today.

### *A Failure of Religion?*

Nor is it true—as many claim—that religion once furnished reliable rules of moral conduct, whereas moral guidelines are today much harder to come by.

Religion could never furnish any but the most basic and general principles, the application of which, to the specific issues of the day or the moment, was always and still is a matter of moral choice and dilemma.

The most cursory study of history bears out the fact that any religious doctrine was always capable of being cited in support of any expedient action. There have always been scoundrels among the

most devout clergy, and men of highest honour among the irreligious.

Moral conduct has always been, in each specific dilemma, a matter for individual judgment, and could not at any time base itself securely on established precedent. We are then, in this regard, no worse off than any previous age.

Indeed, the times have always been in flux. We could not stand it otherwise. Man, from the most elementary structure of his nervous system up to its highest function, lives only through change. With regard to perception, any constant stimulus—sound, touch, taste—becomes imperceptible; to perceive anything, we must perceive changes in intensity or quality of stimulus. With regard to dogma, as with regard to physical posture, any prolonged lack of change leads to inertia, loss of feeling and sleep, and, eventually, death.

Without change, the human mind, like the human body, is not viable. By extension, the same holds true for the larger human body, the body politic.

How is change brought about? By whom?

### *The Myth of the Hero*

Ah, here we come back to speaking of youth. For at all times, destroying what is old and building the new, destroying what is bad and building what should be better, has been the task of the young. In myth, which is the repository of human wisdom, we always find a *young* hero confronting an *old* order, in the form of a dragon, a tyrant, a monster, a muddle, or simply his father (or, in older times, the regime of women).

He is a hero precisely because he confronts, fights, and defeats these old and oppressive powers; to the extent to which he not only destroys the old order but sets up a new, he is a culture hero.

In such context, of course, we cheer him on. He is a pleasure to watch, and we wish him success. But beware: Emerging from mythology into history, the culture hero changes title and becomes the revolutionary, the rebel.

Now the rebel, like the culture hero, is still, beyond a doubt, the most noble manifestation of humanity. It is in the rebel that our essence burns with its hardest flame. But in so far as the rebel today confronts—and combats—us as the established order, we are inclined to look somewhat more closely at his credentials.

#### *A Rebel vs. A Delinquent*

What distinguishes the rebel from the delinquent?

Just this: There is no rebel without a cause; there is no delinquent with one.

The rebel has a keen and outraged sense of right and wrong. He is obsessed with the evil of injustice, he has a well-formulated grievance against the status quo, and he means to do something about it. He is a man with a sense of history and continuity, planning to re-shape the world in his own image, according to his own system.

He is firmly convinced that, under his rule, the world will be a better world for all. This is equally true in fields other than politics: hence the unending series of "new waves" in the arts, in literature, even in science.

The very opposite is true of the delinquent. He has no sense of right or wrong, only a feeling of hurt. He does not care about justice, except to evade it; he has all sorts of grievances, but no notion of how to right them. As to improving the world, he couldn't care less, and any notion of assuming responsibility is positively frightening to him. *Delinquere* means to desist, to let go, to give up. In short, to drop out.

#### *The Hippies*

And so, back to the flower children. Are they to be classed as delinquents, together with ordinary car thieves, truants, pickpockets, and pimps? Have they no cause?

Let us admit that the first hippies—and a sprinkling of their imitators—had a cause of sorts. They did not mean to establish a new order (for hippiedom is only feasible with the support and with the goods and services of a non-hippie world), but they did mean to express, in the most graphic terms: "The present order stinks." This is probably worth saying.

And the hippies who have developed new art styles in painting and music and thus produced a new order must be accepted as minor revolutionaries.

But the vast majority of present-day hippies merely drop out, and do not pop up with anything new. They have in fact left behind the challenges of this world to such an extent that their unstimulated, unstimulable, somnolent zombie-ism at times impresses us as positively uncanny.

Here lies the "gap." These are the

kids we truly cannot reach; these are the most farout delinquents, and some of them, drifting further and further into the fog of alienation (the old term for insanity) will probably never come back.

### *Who is Responsible?*

Who is responsible? Society? The parents?

Psychoanalysis, stressing early environment, has emphasized parental influence. In the process, it has probably unduly slighted the role of genetics, of inheritance and temperament.

A child may be clay to be moulded, but there are different kinds of clay, and some are more suitable for moulding than others. Some kinds of clay will inevitably fall apart, no matter how skilled the potter. So the parental role is limited by the inherent capabilities of the child. But it still remains that moulding and shaping need to be done, and that such shaping may in one instance produce a hero, and in another a delinquent. What makes the difference?

### *The Moral Dimension*

The answer, to me, seems embarrassingly simple. Since the distinction between rebel and delinquent lies in the presence or absence of moral concern, it must be the conveyance of such concern which is of the essence. Parents convey by precept, but primarily by example.

It would follow that a concerned, committed, even opinionated parent is likely to raise concerned, involved children; and an uncaring, opinionless, or

delinquent parent is likely to foster delinquents.

Now the involvement of a parent is apparent to a child primarily in terms of the involvement of the parent *with* the child, and secondarily through as much of his involvement with the world as he can show or explain to the child.

If the involvement with the child is to lead to formation of a moral character, it must itself be, in part at least, of a moral nature. It must, in other words, include firm attitudes towards right and wrong, conveyed as firm do's and don'ts; it must include the setting of firm limits which the child may securely test.

Of the specific parental values thus conveyed to the child he may accept, or fight, some or all; this does not matter. What matters is the realization—probably unformulated and unconscious—that there are values, that one can care for them, that one can disagree on them, that they are important enough so one may have to fight for them.

Thus positive parental attitudes, regardless of their content, are likely to convey to the child both that the parents care for the world, and that they care for him. Such a cared-for child—regardless of whether he admires or fights his parents, or both—is likely to derive a sense of self-importance which projects itself as an anticipation of eventual importance in the world. Such a child will feel himself the heir of an enterprise he intends to have his say about when his time comes.

### *Genesis of Delinquency*

By contrast, many well-meaning par-

ents have emphasized "letting the child grow naturally," "not squelching a child's spontaneity." In practice this has amounted to setting no clear limits for the child.

The immediate results were unmanly, disagreeable children who more often showed boredom rather than spontaneity. The long-range results were more serious: I have been told over and over again by such children—now adults—that they interpreted the lack of parental guidelines and prohibitions as lack of concern and lack of love. They feel, and felt, that the parents had deserted them (*delinquere*), and they derived therefrom a sense of worthlessness and self-doubt, a gnawing awareness of lacking identity.

Hence, with regard to the world, they feel ineffectual and confused, disoriented, afraid of mistakes and of dissenting opinion.

Some may become hippies, and look content and disreputable; some may drift into the lower executive echelons of corporations, and look content and highly reputable; but in either case they are likely to carry within them the hollow awareness of their nonentity, of their desertion (*delinquere*) before the issue of life.

#### *What Happens to Rebels?*

But what about the other one, the rebel: What becomes of him eventually? Does the young hero, having fought his battle, rule happily ever after?

Alas, heroes do not age well. As the day fades into the night, so the burning rebel fades into the establishment. In myth, the dragon-killer becomes himself

the dragon, to be killed in turn. In life, revolution turns into vested interest, and the attempt at perpetual revolution—keeping the revolution continuously in the same hands and concerned with the same issues—is as futile as the attempt at perpetual motion.

Youth will ever say: You have had *your* revolution, now we want *ours*, and ours will be *different* and will upset *you*. And this, it would seem, is as it should be.

#### *Advice to the Middle-Aged*

So here, as a guide for the perplexed, is a middle-aged manifesto: Let us stick by our guns (metaphorically, of course), and let no one uncritically worship youth. Let us be clear and outspoken in confronting them with our convictions, and with our hopes and fears and doubts.

We can admit our mistakes without shame; they will make theirs. We can let youth attack our edifice, and try to knock off what is loose and rotten—it is their heroic job—while we defend what is good and durable. For there is much about it worth defending, thanks to our own past rebellions, and the rebellions before that.

As to whatever mess we may have made (and who didn't make a mess?) we at least did not wash our hands of it. So let those who care, try to do better.

But as to those who do not care, who only want to drop out: Regard them not with romantic envy, and clothe them not with false glory. Let them—since we cannot reach them in any case—pack up their pads and quietly steal away (*delinquere*) into the night of their irrelevance.

## Some Elders Speak

# YOUTH, CHANGE, AND VIOLENCE

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KENNETH KENISTON

*Dr. Kenneth Keniston, Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at Yale University, is the author of "The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society" and "Young Radicals: Notes on Committed Youth."*

*In the following essay, abridged with his permission from an article in "The American Scholar," he also considers, though from a different stance than Dr. Lederer, the leftist activists and the hippies.*

WE OFTEN feel that today's youth are somehow "different." There is something about today's world that seems to give the young a special restlessness, an increased impatience with the "hypocrisies" of the past, and yet an open gentleness and a searching honesty more intense than that of youth in the past.

Much of what we see in today's students and non-students is of course familiar: to be young is in one sense always the same. But it is also new and different, as each generation confronts its unique historical position and role.

Yet we find it hard to define the difference. Partly the difficulty derives from the elusive nature of youth itself. Partly

the problem stems from the sheer variety and number of "youth" in a society where youth is often protracted into the mid-twenties.

No one characterization can be adequate to the drop-outs and stay-ins, hawks and doves, up-tights and cools, radicals and conservatives that constitute American youth. But although we understand that the young are as various as the old in our complex society, the sense that they are different persists.

In giving today's American youth this special quality and mood, two movements have played a major role: the New Left and the hippies. Both groups are spontaneous creations of the young; both are in strong reaction to the "Organized System"; both seek alternatives to the

institutions of middle-class life.

Radicals and hippies are also different from each other in numerous ways, from psychodynamics to ideology. The hippie has dropped out of a society he considers irredeemable: his attention is riveted on interior change and the expansion of personal consciousness. The radical has not given up on this society: his efforts are aimed at changing and redeeming it. Furthermore, both "movements" together comprise but a few per cent of their contemporaries.

But, although neither hippies nor New Leftists are "representatives" of their generation, together they are helping to give this generation its distinctive mood. By examining the style of these young men and women, we come closer to understanding what makes their generation "different."

#### *The Post-Modern Style*

Today's youth is the first generation to grow up with "modern" parents; it is the first "post-modern" generation. This fact alone distinguishes it from previous generations and helps create a mood born out of modernity, affluence, rapid social change and violence. Despite the many pitfalls in the way of any effort to delineate a post-modern style, the effort seems worth making.

For not only in America but in other nations, new styles of dissent and unrest have begun to appear, suggesting the slow emergence of youthful style that is a reflection of and reaction to the history of the past two decades.

In emphasizing "style" rather than ideology, programme, or characteristics,

I mean to suggest that the common elements in post-modern youth groups are to be found in the way they approach the world, rather than in their actual behaviour, ideologies or goals. Indeed, the focus on process rather than programme is itself a prime characteristic of the post-modern style, reflecting a world where flux is more obvious than fixed purpose.

Post-modern youth, at least in America, is very much in process, unfinished in its development, psychologically open to a historically unpredictable future. In such a world, where ideologies come and go, and where revolutionary change is the rule, a style, a way of doing things, is more possible to identify than any fixed goals or constancies of behaviour.

Post-modern youth display a special personal and psychological openness, flexibility and unfinishedness. Although many of today's youth have achieved a sense of inner identity, the term "identity" suggests a fixity, stability and "closure" that many of them are not willing to accept.

The concepts of a personal future and a "life work" are ever more hazily defined: the effort to change oneself, redefine oneself or reform oneself does not cease with the arrival of adulthood.

This fluidity and openness extends through all areas of life. Both hippie and New Left movements are non-ideological, hostile to doctrine and formula. In the New Left, the focus is on "tactics"; amongst hippies, on simple direct acts of love and communication. In neither group does one find clear-cut long-range plans, life patterns laid out in advance. The vision of the personal and collective future is blurred and vague: later adult-

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hood is left deliberately open.

### *Generational Identification*

Post-modern youth views itself primarily as a part of a generation rather than an organization. They identify with their contemporaries as a group, rather than with elders, and they do not have clearly defined leaders and heroes. Among young radicals, for example, the absence of heroes or older leaders is impressive: even those five years older are sometimes viewed with mild amusement or suspicion.

Identification with a generational movement, rather than a cross-generational organization or a nongenerational ideology, distinguishes post-modern youth from its parents and from the "previous" generation. In addition, it also creates "generational" distinctions involving five years and less.

Within the New Left, clear lines are drawn between the "old New Left" (approximate age, 30), the New Left (between 22 and 28) and the "new New Left" (under 22). Generations, then, are separated by a very brief span; and the individual's own phase of youthful usefulness—for example, as an organizer—is limited to a relatively few years. Whatever is to be accomplished, he feels, must therefore be done soon.

Generational consciousness also entails a feeling of psychological disconnection from previous generations, their life situations and their ideologies. Among young radicals, there is a strong conviction that the older ideologies are exhausted or irrelevant, expressed in detached amusement at the doctrinaire disputes of the "old Left" and impatience

with "old liberals."

Among hippies, the irrelevance of the parental past is even greater: if there is any source of insight, it is the timeless tradition of the East, not the values of the previous generation in American society. But in both groups, the central values are those created in the present by the "Movement" itself.

### *Personalism*

Both groups are highly personalistic in their styles of relationship. Among hippies, personalism usually entails privatism, a withdrawal from efforts to be involved in or to change the wider social world. Among young radicals, personalism is joined with efforts to change the world.

But despite this difference, both groups care most deeply about the creation of intimate, loving, open and trusting relations among small groups of people.

Writers who condemn the depersonalization of the modern world, who insist on "I-thou" relationships, find a ready audience in post-modern youth. The ultimate measure of man's life is the quality of his personal relationships; the greatest sin is to be unable to relate to others in a direct, face-to-face, one-to-one relationship.

The obverse of personalism is the discomfort created by any non-personal, "objectified," professionalized and, above all, exploitative relationship. Manipulation, power relationships, control and domination are at violent odds with the I-thou mystique. Failure to treat others as fully human, inability to enter

into personal relationships with them, is viewed with dismay in others and with guilt in oneself.

Even with opponents the goal is to establish intimate confrontations in which the issues can be discussed openly. When opponents refuse to "meet with" young radicals, this produces anger and frequently demonstrations.

#### *Non-asceticism*

Post-modern youth is non-ascetic, expressive and sexually free. The sexual openness of the hippie world has been much discussed and criticized in the mass media. One finds a similar sexual and expressive freedom among many young radicals, although it is less provocatively demonstrative.

It is of continuing importance to these young men and women to overcome and move beyond inhibition and puritanism to a greater physical expressiveness, sexual freedom, capacity for intimacy, and ability to enjoy life.

In the era of the Pill, responsible sexual expression becomes increasingly possible outside of marriage, at the same time that sexuality becomes less laden with guilt, fear and prohibition. As asceticism disappears, so does promiscuity: the personalism of post-modern youth requires that sexual expression must occur in the context of "meaningful" human relationships, of intimacy and mutuality. Sex is seen as right and natural between people who are "good to each other," but sexual exploitation—failure to treat one's partner as a person—is strongly disapproved.

The search for personal and organiza-

tional inclusiveness is still another characteristic of post-modern youth. These young men and women attempt to include, both within their personalities and within their movements, every opposite, every possibility and every person, no matter how apparently alien.

#### *Inclusiveness*

Psychologically, inclusiveness involves an effort to be open to every aspect of one's feelings, impulses, and fantasies; to synthesize and integrate rather than repress and dissociate; not to reject or exclude any part of one's personality or potential.

Interpersonally, inclusiveness means a capacity for involvement with, identification with and collaboration with those who are superficially alien: the peasant in Vietnam, the poor in America, the nonwhite, the deprived and deformed.

Indeed, so great is the pressure to include the alien, especially among hippies, that the apparently alien is often treated more favourably than the superficially similar: thus, the respect afforded to people and ideas that are distant and strange is sometimes not equally afforded those who are similar, be they one's parents or their middle-class values.

One corollary of inclusiveness is intense internationalism. What matters to hippies or young radicals is not where a person comes from, but what kind of relationship is possible with him. The nationality of ideas matters little: Zen Buddhism, American pragmatism, French existentialism, Indian mysticism or Yugoslav communism are accorded equal hearings.

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Inter-racialism is another corollary of inclusiveness: racial barriers are minimized or nonexistent, and the ultimate expressions of unity between the races, sexual relationships and marriage, are considered basically natural and normal, whatever the social problems they currently entail.

In post-modern youth, then, identity and ideology are no longer parochial or national; increasingly, the reference group is the world, and the artificial subspeciation of the human species is broken down.

### *Anti-technologism*

Post-modern youth has grave reservations about many of the technological aspects of the contemporary world. The depersonalization of life, commercialism, careerism and familism, the bureaucratization and complex organization of advanced nations—all seem intolerable to these young men and women who seek to create new forms of association and action, to oppose the technologism of our day.

Bigness, impersonality, stratification, and hierarchy are rejected, as is any involvement with the furtherance of technological values. In reaction to these values, post-modern youth seeks simplicity, naturalness, personhood, and even voluntary poverty.

But a revolt against technologism is only possible, of course, in a technological society; and to be effective, it must inevitably exploit technology to overcome technologism. Thus in post-modern youth, the fruits of technology—synthetic hallucinogens in the hippie subculture,

modern technology of communication among young radicals—and the affluence made possible by technological society are a precondition for a post-modern style.

The demonstrative poverty of the hippie would be meaningless in a society where poverty is routine. For the radical to work for subsistence wages as a matter of choice is to *have* a choice not available in most parts of the world. Furthermore, to "organize" against the pernicious aspects of the technological era requires high skill in the use of modern technologies of organization: the long-distance telephone, the use of the mass media, high-speed travel, the mimeograph machine, and so on.

In the end, then, it is not the material but the spiritual consequences of technology that post-modern youth opposes: indeed, in the developing nations, those who exhibit a post-modern style may be in the vanguard of movements toward modernization. What is adamantly rejected is the contamination of life with the values of technological organization and production.

### *Participation*

Post-modern youth is committed to a search for new forms of groups, of organizations and of action where decision-making is collective, and arguments are resolved by "talking them out." The objective is to create new styles of life and new types of organization that humanize rather than dehumanize, that activate and strengthen the participants rather than undermining or weakening them. And the primary vehicle for such

participation is the small, face-to-face group of peers.

Nor is this solely an American search: one sees a similar focus, for example, in the Communist nations, with their emphasis on small groups that engage in the "struggle" of mutual criticism and self-criticism.

The search for effectiveness combined with participation has also led to the evolution of "new" styles of social and political action. The newness of such forms of political action as parades and demonstrations is open to some question. Perhaps what is most new is the *style* in which old forms of social action are carried out. The most consistent effort is to force one's opponent into a personal confrontation with one's own point of view.

Sit-ins, freedom rides, insistence upon discussions, silent and nonviolent demonstrations—all have a prime objective to "get through to" the other side, to force reflection, to bear witness to one's own principles, and to impress upon others the validity of these same principles.

There is much that is old and familiar about this, although few of today's young radicals or hippies are ideologically committed to Gandhian views of nonviolence. Yet the underlying purpose of many of the emerging forms of social and political action, whether they be "human be-ins," "love-ins," peace marches or "teach-ins," has a new motive—hope that by expressing one's own principles, by "demonstrating" one's convictions, one can through sheer moral force win over one's opponents and lure them as well into participating with one's own values.

Among post-modern youth, one finds

a virtually unanimous rejection of the "merely academic." This rejection is one manifestation of a wider insistence on the relevance, applicability and personal meaningfulness of knowledge. It would be wrong simply to label this trend "anti-intellectual," for many new radicals and not a few hippies are themselves highly intellectual people.

#### *Anti-academicism*

What is demanded is that intelligence be engaged with the world, just as action should be informed by knowledge. In the New Left, at least amongst leaders, there is enormous respect for knowledge and information, and great impatience with those who act without understanding. Even amongst hippies, where the importance of knowledge and information is less stressed, it would be wrong simply to identify the rejection of the academic world and its values with a total rejection of intellect, knowledge, and wisdom.

To post-modern youth, then, most of what is taught in schools, colleges and universities is largely irrelevant to living life in the last third of the twentieth century. Many academics are seen as direct or accidental apologists for the Organized System in the United States.

Much of what they teach is considered simply unconnected to the experience of post-modern youth. New ways of learning are sought: ways that combine action with reflection upon action, ways that fuse engagement in the world with understanding of it. In an era of rapid change, the accrued wisdom of the past is cast into question, and youth seeks not only new knowledge, but new ways of learning

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and knowing.

### *Principle and Practice*

The massive and violent social changes of the postwar era affect the young in a variety of ways. In particular, they contribute to a special sensitivity to the discrepancy between principle and practice. For during this era of rapid social change the values most deeply embedded in the parental generation and expressed in their behaviour in time of crisis are frequently very different from the more "modern" principles, ideals, and values that this generation has professed and attempted to practice in bringing up its children.

Filial perception of the discrepancy between practice and principle may help explain the very widespread sensitivity amongst post-modern youth to the "hypocrisy" of the previous generation.

In many middle-class teenagers today, for example, the focal issue of adolescent rebellion against parents often seems to be just this discrepancy: the children arguing that their parents' endorsement of independence and self-determination for their children is "hypocritical" in that it does not correspond with the real behaviour of the parents when their children actually seek independence.

Similar perceptions of parental "hypocrisy" occur around racial matters: for example, there are many parents who in principle support racial and religious equality, but become violently upset when their children date someone from another race or religion.

Around political activity similar issues arise. For example, many of the parents

of today's youth espouse in principle the cause of political freedom, but are not involved themselves in politics and oppose their children's involvement lest they "jeopardize their record" or "ruin their later career."

Of course, no society ever fully lives up to its own professed ideals. In every society there is a gap between creedal values and actual practices, and in every society, the recognition of this gap constitutes a powerful motor for social change.

But in most societies, especially when social change is slow and institutions are powerful and unchanging, there occurs what can be termed *institutionalization of hypocrisy*. Children and adolescents routinely learn when it is "reasonable" to expect that the values people profess will be implemented in their behaviour, and when it is not reasonable.

Thus, the mere fact of a discrepancy between creedal values and practice is not at all unusual. But what is special about the present situation of rapid value change is, first, that parents themselves tend to have two conflicting sets of values, one related to the experience of their early childhood, the other to the ideologies and principles acquired in adulthood; and second, that no stable institutions or rules for defining hypocrisy out of existence have yet been fully evolved.

In such a situation, young people may simply be able to perceive the universal gulf between principle and practice more clearly than previous generations have done.

This points to one of the central characteristics of post-modern youth. They insist on taking seriously a great variety of political, personal, and social

principles that "no one in his right mind" ever before thought of attempting to extend to such situations as dealing with strangers, relations between the races, or international politics.

Finally, post-modern youth of all persuasions meets on the ground of nonviolence. For hippies, the avoidance of and calming of violence is a central objective, symbolized by gifts of flowers to policemen and the slogan, "Make love, not war." And although nonviolence as a philosophical principle has lost most of its power in the New Left, nonviolence as a psychological orientation is a crucial—perhaps *the* crucial—issue.

The nonviolence of post-modern youth should not be confused with pacifism: these are not necessarily young men and women who believe in turning the other cheek or who are systematically opposed to fighting for what they believe in.

But the basic style of both radicals and hippies is profoundly opposed to warfare, destruction, and exploitation of man by man, and to violence whether on an interpersonal or an international scale. Even among those who do not consider nonviolence a good in itself, a psychological inoculation against violence, even a fear of it, is a unifying theme.

That this should be so in the modern world is readily understandable. Over all of us hangs the continual threat of a technological violence more meaningless, absurd, total, and unpremeditated than any ever imagined before. Individual life always resonates with historical change; history is not merely the backdrop for development, but its ground.

To be grounded in the history of the

past two decades is to have experienced, both directly and vicariously, violent upheaval, violent worldwide revolution, and the unrelenting possibility of worldwide destruction. It should not surprise us, then, that the issue of violence is a focal concern for those of contemporary youth with the greatest historical consciousness.

Many of the dilemmas of young radicals seem related to their extraordinarily zealous efforts to avoid any action or relationship in which inner or outer violence might be evoked. Distaste for violence animates the profound revulsion many of today's youth feel toward the war in Southeast Asia, just as it underlies a similar revulsion against the exploitation or control of man by man.

The same psychological nonviolence is related to young radicals' avoidance of traditional leadership lest it lead to domination, to their emphasis on person-to-person participation and "confrontation," and even to their unwillingness to "play the media" in an attempt to gain political effectiveness.

Even the search for forms of mass political action that avoid physical violence—a preference severely tested and somewhat undermined by recent events—points to a considerable distaste for the direct expression of aggression.

I do not mean to suggest that post-modern youth contains a disproportionate number of tight-lipped pacifists or rage-filled deniers of their own inner angers. On the contrary, among today's youth, exuberance, passionateness and zest are the rule rather than the exception. Nor are hippies and young radicals incapable of anger, rage and resentment—especially when their principles are viola-

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ted. But for many of these young men and women, the experiences of early life and the experience of the postwar world are joined in a special sensitivity to the issue of violence, whether in themselves or in others.

Yet the position of psychologically nonviolent youth in a violent world is difficult and paradoxical. On the one hand, he seeks to minimize violence, but on the other, his efforts often elicit violence from others. At the same time that he attempts to work to actualize his vision of a peaceful world, he must confront more directly and continually than do his peers the fact that the world is neither peaceful nor just.

The frustration and discouragement of his work repetitively reawaken his

anger, which must forever be rechannelled into peaceful paths. Since he continually confronts destructiveness and exploitation in the world, his own inevitable potential for destructiveness and exploitativeness arouses in him great guilt.

The young men and women who make up the New Left in America, like other post-modern youth, have far less difficulty in living with their sexual natures than did their parents; but what they continue to find difficult to live with, what they still repress, avoid and counteract is their own potential for violence.

It remains to be seen whether, in the movement toward "resistance" and disruption of today's young radicals, their psychological nonviolence will continue to be reflected in their actions.

## Some Elders Speak

# THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS

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REV. THEODORE M. HESBURGH, CSC

*President of Notre Dame University, and recently appointed chairman of the President's Advisory Commission on Civil Liberties, Rev. T.M. Hesburgh has been a leading spokesman among university administrators in behalf of the freedom of the university from political interference, of "law and order," and of the rule of reason.*

*Below are two excerpts, made with his permission, the first taken from a speech delivered at the University of Southern California shortly after the death of Senator Robert Kennedy, the second from his correspondence early in 1969.*

### In Defence of the Younger Generation

I WOULD like to begin today with a quotation from a famous author: "What is happening to our young people? They disrespect their elders, they disobey their parents. They ignore the laws. They riot in the streets inflamed with wild notions. Their morals are decaying. What is to become of them?" These words were written more than 2,300 years ago, by Plato, the Greek philosopher.

Another equally famous Greek philosopher, Aristotle, took an almost equally dim view of the young: "Young people have exalted notions, because they have not yet been humbled by life or learned its necessary limitations; moreover, their

hopeful disposition makes them think themselves equal to great things. They would always rather do noble deeds than useful ones: their lives are regulated more by moral feelings than by reasoning—all their mistakes are in the direction of doing things excessively and vehemently. They overdo everything—they love too much, hate too much, and the same with everything else."

I begin thus today just to assure the older generation that the generational gap looks much the same at a distance of twenty-four centuries, and likewise to remind this younger generation that they did not invent youth and all that makes

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it both attractive and difficult. I would like to say of the younger generation what Frenchmen are purported to say of women: *vive le difference*—long live the difference between generations. We need it. They do too.

This is not to say that the difference between generations is always exactly the same—even though Plato and Aristotle may strike a few responsive chords. For one thing, there are not only many more people around today—about half of them are young people. Twenty years ago there were thirty million Americans under twenty years of age. Today there are over eighty million Americans under twenty, and, in a few years, half of the population will be aged under twenty-five.

This makes the younger generation more visible, more omnipresent, and, let's face it, a very substantial part personally of what America is. There is no reason to believe that they will be satisfied to be a silent or passive part of America either. Nor should they be.

If, as Aristotle says, they love too much and hate too much, that's a whale of a lot of vehement love and hate. But the real question is: What do they love and hate? I suspect that they do not love excessively the world we have created, or at least allow to exist and I suspect that they hate some things that are well worth hating and difficult to hate excessively: like war, inequality for millions of human beings on earth, poverty in the midst of affluence, hypocrisy in stating one set of values and following another, rhetoric instead of action, promises without fulfilment, empty words, qualities they often find in

the adult generation.

May be the most discouraging thing about youth is that every day they are getting older. On days like today they come of age, with the great temptation to become like everyone else. To compromise with the world as it is and ultimately, alas, to become the unwilling target of their own children's ire, as they, youth of yesteryear, begin to do the useful rather than the noble deeds they once dreamed about in their youth.

Maybe the world of youth is too good to be true and lasting. Maybe instead of being so concerned about the idealism, the generosity, and the vehemence of youth, we should rather mourn the fact that youth passes all too quickly into the grim life of adulthood; when we find it so difficult to really love what is good and hate what is evil, and lose the simplicity of youth that can so easily repeat the prayer of the great Hindu poet, Rabindranath Tagore: "Lord, God, only let me make my life simple and straight, like a flute of reed, for Thee to fill with music."

The whole point of my remarks today is that the young can and should contribute to man's perennial task of remaking the world, especially since they are half of the world that needs remaking. Neither half, young or old, can do it alone. We elders may at times grow restive at their prodding, protest, and revolt, and they may find us impossibly slow when we do not think we can remake anything by tomorrow morning, with or without their help.

It is likely that history will repeat itself and the gap between the generations will never be completely bridged by

understanding, but I like to believe that there are other workable bridges, at least more workable than anything in common use today, and their names are laughter and love. Indeed, I can think of no better way of redeeming this tragic world today than by love and laughter.

Too many of the young have forgotten how to laugh, and too many of the

elders have forgotten how to love. Would not the dark tragedy of our life be lightened if only we could all learn to laugh more easily at ourselves and to love one another. It may sound quixotic, but I think this says a lot about the generation gap—how to understand it and how to cure it while we still have time.

### February 17, 1969—Dear Notre Dame Faculty and Students

THIS LETTER has been on my mind for weeks. It is both time and overtime that it be written. I have outlined the core of it to the Student Life Council, have discussed the text with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Vice Presidents Council, all the Deans of the University, and the Chairmen of the Faculty Senate and the Student Life Council.

This letter does not relate directly to what happened here last weekend, although those events made it seem even more necessary to get this letter written. I have tried to write calmly, in the wee hours of the morning when at last there is quiet and pause for reflection.

My hope is that these ideas will have deep personal resonances in our own community, although the central problem they address exists everywhere in the university world today and, by instant communication, feeds upon itself.

It is not enough to label it the alienation of youth from our society. God knows there is enough and more than enough in our often non-glorious civilization to be alienated from, be you young, middle-aged, or old.

The central problem to me is what

we do about it and in what manner, if we are interested in healing rather than destroying our world. Youth especially has much to offer—idealism, generosity, dedication, and service. The last thing a shaken society needs is more shaking.

The last thing a noisy, turbulent, and disintegrating community needs is more noise, turbulence, and disintegration. Understanding and analysis of social ills cannot be conducted in a boiler factory. Compassion has a quiet way of service. Complicated social mechanisms, out-of-joint, are not adjusted with sledge hammers.

The university cannot cure all our ills today, but it can make a valiant beginning by bringing all its intellectual and moral powers to bear upon them: all the idealism and generosity of its young people, all the wisdom and intelligence of its oldsters, all the expertise and competence of those who are in their middle years. But it must do all this as a university does, within its proper style and capability, no longer an ivory tower, but not the Red Cross either.

Now to the heart of my message. I now have statements from the Academic Council, the Faculty Senate, the Student

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Life Council, some College Councils, the Alumni Board, and a whole spate of letters from individual faculty members and a few students. Some of these are enclosed in this letter.

In general, the reaction was practically unanimous that this community recognizes the validity of protest in our day—sometimes even the necessity—regarding the current burning issues of our society: war and peace, especially Vietnam; civil rights, especially of minority groups; the stance of the University vis-a-vis moral issues of great public concern; the operation of the University as university.

There was also practical unanimity that the University could not continue to exist as an open society, dedicated to the discussion of all issues of importance, if protests were of such a nature that the normal operations of the University were in any way impeded, or if the rights of any member of this community were abrogated, peacefully or non-peacefully.

I believe that I now have a clear mandate from this University community to see that: 1) our lines of communication between all segments of the community are kept as open as possible, with all legitimate means of communicating dissent assured, expanded, and protected; 2) civility and rationality are maintained as the most reasonable means of dissent within the academic community; and 3) violation of other's rights or obstruction of the life of the University are outlawed as illegitimate means of dissent in this kind of open society. Violence was especially deplored as a violation of everything that the University community stands for.

Now comes my duty of stating, clearly and unequivocally, what happens if. I'll try to make it as simple as possible to avoid misunderstanding by anyone. May I begin by saying that all of this is hypothetical and I personally hope it never happens here at Notre Dame.

But, if it does, anyone or any group that substitutes force for rational persuasion, be it violent or non-violent, will be given fifteen minutes of meditation to cease and desist. They will be told that they are, by their actions, going counter to the overwhelming conviction of this community as to what is proper here.

If they do not within that time period cease and desist, they will be asked for their identity cards. Those who produce these will be suspended from this community as not understanding what this community is. Those who do not have or will not produce identity cards will be assumed not to be members of the community and will be charged with trespassing and disturbing the peace on private property and treated accordingly by the law.

The judgment regarding the impeding of normal University operations or the violation of the rights of other members of the community will be made by the Dean of Students. Recourse for certification of this fact for students so accused is to the tri-partite Disciplinary Board established by the Student Life Council. Faculty members have recourse to the procedures outlined in the Faculty Manual. Judgment of the matter will be delivered within five days following the fact, for justice deferred is justice denied to all concerned.

After notification of suspension, or

trespass in the case of noncommunity members, if there is not then within five minutes a movement to cease and desist, students will be notified of expulsion from this community and the law will deal with them as non-students.

Lest there be any possible misunderstanding, it should be noted that law enforcement in this procedure is not directed at students. They receive academic sanctions in the second instance of recalcitrance and, only after three clear opportunities to remain in student status, if they still insist on resisting the will of the community, are they then expelled and become non-students to be treated as other non-students, or outsiders.

There seems to be a current myth that university members are not responsible to the law, and that somehow the law is the enemy, particularly those whom society has constituted to uphold and enforce the law. I would like to insist here that all of us are responsible to the duly constituted laws of this University community and to all of the laws of the land. There is no other guarantee of civilization versus the jungle or mob rule, here or elsewhere.

If someone invades your home, do you dialogue with him or call the law? Without the law, the university is a sitting duck for any small group from outside or inside that wishes to destroy it, to incapacitate it, to terrorize it at whim. The argument goes—or has gone—invoke the law and you lose the university community.

My only response is that without the law you may well lose the university—and beyond that—the larger society that

supports it and that is most deeply wounded when law is no longer respected, bringing an end of everyone's most cherished rights.

I have studied at some length the new politics of confrontation. The rhythm is simple: 1) find a cause, any cause, silly or not; 2) in the name of the cause, get a few determined people to abuse the rights and privileges of the community so as to force a confrontation at any cost of boorishness or incivility; 3) once this has occurred, justified or not, orderly or not, yell police brutality—if it does not happen, provoke it by foul language, physical abuse, whatever, and then count on a larger measure of sympathy from the up-to-now apathetic or passive members of the community.

Then call for amnesty, the head of the president on a platter, the complete submission to any and all demands. One beleaguered president has said that these people want to be martyrs thrown to toothless lions.

So it has gone, and it is generally well orchestrated. Again, my only question: must it be so? Must universities be subjected, willy-nilly, to such intimidation and victimization whatever their good will in the matter? Somewhere a stand must be made.

No one wants the forces of law on this or any other campus, but if some necessitate it, as a last and dismal alternative to anarchy and mob tyranny, let them shoulder the blame instead of receiving the sympathy of a community they would hold at bay. The only alternative I can imagine is turning the majority of the community loose on them, and then you have two mobs. I

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know of no one who would opt for this alternative—always lurking in the wings.

We can have a thousand resolutions as to what kind of a society we want, but when lawlessness is afoot, and all authority is flouted, faculty, administration, and student, then we invoke the normal societal forces of law or we allow the university to die beneath our hapless and hopeless gaze.

I have no intention of presiding over such a spectacle: too many people have given too much of themselves and their lives to this University to let this happen here. Without being melodramatic, if this conviction makes this my last will and testament to Notre Dame, so be it.

May I now say in all sincerity that I never want to see any student expelled from this community because, in many ways, this is always an educative failure. Even so, I must likewise be committed to the survival of the University community as one of man's best hopes in these troubled times. I know of no other way of insuring both ends than to say of every member of this community, faculty and students, that we are all ready and prepared and anxious to respond to every intellectual and moral concern in the world today, in every way proper to the University.

At the same time, we cannot allow a small minority to impose their will on the majority who have spoken regarding the University's style of life; we cannot allow a few to substitute force of any kind for persuasion to accept their personal idea of what is right or proper. We only insist on the rights of all, minority and majority, the climate of civility and rationality, and a preponderant

moral abhorrence of violence or inhuman forms of persuasion that violate our style of life and the nature of the University.

Since last November I have been bombarded mightily by the hawks and the doves—almost equally. I have resisted both and continue to recognize the right to protest—through every legitimate channel—and to resist as well those who would unthinkingly trifle with the survival of the University as one of the few open societies left to mankind today.

There is no divine assurance that the University will survive as we have known and cherished it—but we do commit ourselves to make the effort and count on this community, in this place, to uphold the efforts that you have inspired by your clear expression of community concern. Thanks to all who have declared themselves, even to those who have slightly disagreed, but are substantially concerned as well.

I truly believe that we are about to witness a revulsion on the part of legislatures, state and national, benefactors, parents, alumni, and the general public for much that is happening in higher education today. If I read the signs of the times correctly, this may well lead to a suppression of the liberty and autonomy that are the lifeblood of a university community.

It may well lead to a rebirth of fascism, unless we ourselves are ready to take a stand for what is right for us. History is not consoling in this regard. We rule ourselves, or others rule us in a way that destroys the university as we have known and loved it.

## Some Elders Speak

# AMERICA'S YOUNG RADICALS: 1922

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GEORGE SANTAYANA

*The discontents and protests of university students are not simply a contemporary phenomenon. In 1922, a distinguished American philosopher commented on the campus radicalism of that period in terms not unfamiliar today.*

George Santayana taught philosophy at Harvard University from 1889 to 1912, later settled in Europe and died in Italy in 1952. A major figure in American and world philosophy of this century, master of an elegant and poetic style, his philosophical works include "The Life of Reason," which viewed reason as the mediator between natural instinct and ideal goals, and "The Realms of Being," which placed greater stress on the role of "animal faith." He also wrote a novel, a book of sonnets, and a richly woven three-volume memoir, "Persons and Places."

The following article from "Forum" was recently reprinted in "George Santayana's America: Essays on Literature and Culture."

WHEN I was a college professor, I sometimes wondered why there was no socialism among the sophomores. Now that I am not there to welcome it, the thing seems to have come. I say to *welcome* it, because although I am a high Tory in my sympathies, I recognize that different hearts must be set on different things, and I like young people who have hearts, and who set them on something. It is a great pity if, for lack of self-knowledge or a congenial environment, they set them on the wrong thing, and

miss their possible happiness, or miss even the noble martyrdom of knowing why they are unhappy.

But they will not have set their hearts on the wrong thing simply because that thing may be indifferent or disagreeable to *me*. My personal feelings have nothing to do with the genuineness of their ideals, or with the worth of their happiness, if they are able to attain it. At most, my experience may make me suspect that these ideals may be unattainable, or that in choosing them these

young men, in some cases, may have misunderstood their own nature, and may be pursuing something which, if they got it, would make them very sick. When that is so, a word of warning from an outsider may not be entirely useless.

The reason why it is easy to mistake the demands of one's own nature is that human instincts are very complex and confused, and that they mature at different times, or are suppressed or disguised altogether; whereas the fancy is peopled only by the shallow image of such things as we happen to have come upon in our experience.

We cannot love, nor warmly imagine, what we have never seen. Even when we hate things as we find them (as every fresh soul must in a great measure) our capacity to conceive better things is limited to such hints as actual things have vouchsafed us. We may therefore have no idea at all of what would really satisfy us; even if it were described to us in words, we should not recognize it as our ideal of happiness. It would seem cold, exotic, irrelevant, because nothing of that sort had as yet entered our experience, or lay in the path immediately open before us.

I was accordingly not at all surprised that the life of the ancients, although alone truly human and addressed to a possible happiness, should not appeal to young America. It is too remote, too simple; it presupposes the absence of this vast modern mechanical momentum, this rushing tide of instrumentalities on which young America is borne along so merrily.

What surprised me a little was that everybody seemed content to go on swimming and swimming: for even when

a man grumbled and worried about his difficulties or mishaps—athletic training, college clubs, family friction, dubious prospects, unrequited love—he yet seemed to be entirely at peace with the general plan of existence as he found it; not at all oppressed by the sense of any surrounding ugliness, vulgarity, vanity, servitude, or emptiness.

#### *Disaffection and Style*

And now, apparently, the awakening has come, at least to a few, and the sophomores (who are many of them out of college) have discovered the necessity of socialism. I call it socialism for short, although they are not all advocates of socialism in a technical sense, but style themselves liberals, radicals, or (modestly) the *Intelligentsia*. The point is that they all proclaim their disgust at the present state of things in America. They denounce the Constitution of the United States, the churches, the government, the colleges, the press, the theatres, and above all they denounce the spirit that vivifies and unifies all these things, the spirit of Business. Here is disaffection breaking out in which seemed the most unanimous, the most satisfied of nations: here are Americans impatient with America.

Is it simply impatience? Is it the measles, and by the time these sophomores are reverend seniors will it have passed away?.... Or is it possible, on the contrary, that they are prophets of something attainable, boy-scouts with a real army behind them, and a definite future?

I have made a severe effort to discover, as well as I may from a distance,

what these rebels want. I see what they are *against*—but what are they *for*? I have not been able to discover it. This may be due to my lack of understanding or to their incapacity to express themselves clearly, for their style is something appalling. But perhaps their scandalous failure in expression, when expression is what they yearn for and demand at all costs, may be a symptom of something deeper: of a radical mistake they have made in the direction of their efforts and aspirations.

They think they need more freedom, more room, a chance to be more spontaneous. I suspect that they have had too much freedom, too much empty space, too much practice in being spontaneous when there was nothing in them to bubble out. Their style is a sign of this: it is not merely that they have no mastery of the English language as hitherto spoken, no clear sense of the value of words, and no simplicity; that they are without the vocabulary or the idiom of cultivated people.

That might all be healthy evolution,

even if a little disconcerting to us old fogies, who can't keep up with the progress of slang. America has a right to a language of its own, and to the largest share in forming that pigeon-English which is to be the "world-language" of the future. But it is not comparatively only that the style of the young radicals is bad, nor in view of traditional standards. It is bad intrinsically; it is muddy, abstract, cumbrous, contorted, joyless, obscure.

If their thoughts were clear, if the images in their minds were definite and fondly cherished, if their principles and allegiances were firm, we should soon learn to read their language and feel it to be pure and limpid, however novel its forms. Dante wrote in a new dialect, provincial and popular; yet how all his words shine like dew on a sunny morning! But Dante had looked long and intently; he had loved silently; he knew what he felt and what he believed. No: it is not more freedom that young America needs in order to be happy; it needs more discipline.

# STUDENT POLITICS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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PHILIP G. ALTBACH

*The subject of this article has been a central interest of the author, who is currently at the University of Wisconsin. He has been a lecturer in Education at Harvard University where he worked on a research project concerning students and politics in developing countries. Dr. Altbach is the author of "Students, Politics and Higher Education in a Developing Society: The Case of Bombay, India," and editor of "Students and Politics in India."*

*The following article appeared originally in "Transition," a bi-monthly magazine published in Kampala, Uganda.*

THE CURRENT discussion concerning the role of the "new left" and particularly the student movement in American society and higher education has been characterized by a combination of wishful thinking and unrealistic expectations. There is no doubt that the "new student left" has been an important force on the campuses in stimulating discussion of educational issues, as well as in the civil rights movement and Vietnam protest agitation.

But the crucial role of the students in such well publicized events as the Berkeley revolt and the Vietnam protests has given an inflated sense of importance to the student movement. Unprecedented attention in the mass media has been followed by more serious commentators

stressing the revolutionary potentialities of the student movement.

I shall try to bring this matter into better perspective by examining the role of students in politics in the developing areas, and pointing out some of the crucial differences between the American situation and political reality in the emerging nations. The purpose of this discussion is not to dismiss the American student movement as unimportant, but to stimulate more realistic thinking concerning the feasible role of students in various movements for social change.

There is no doubt that students have played a major role as agents of social change in many developing nations. Recent events in South Vietnam, where the students have been a key factor in

anti-government demonstrations, in Indonesia where it seems that students pressured the military to assume power from President Sukarno, in Ecuador, where students precipitated a military coup, and in other areas have shown the importance of students in political developments. There has hardly been a political upheaval in these nations in which students have not taken an active and often crucial part.

What are the conditions which permit students to play so active a political role? In the developing areas, university and sometimes even secondary school students are among the few "modern" and politically conscious elements in their societies. As such, they are indispensable elements which any government must consider, and whose confidence must in the last analysis be gained if the nation is to achieve the goals of economic development plans and obtain the accoutrements of modernity.

University students are, in a real sense, a "presumptive elite." Their education prepares them to take a vital role in a modernizing society, and both they and the authorities realize their crucial position. Often students constitute an important element of "public opinion," since the articulate part of the general population is often quite small, with literacy limited to a relative handful.

The importance of students in the process of national development is illustrated by a recent encounter between the President of the Ivory Coast and the Student Union. The President summoned the leaders of the Student Union to a full fledged conference, at which he argued with them in order to secure their alle-

giance. Although the threat of the withdrawal of important government scholarships was used against the students, in general the government officials were genuinely interested in convincing the students to affirm their loyalty. In the end, the students did agree to join the ruling party as a group. This incident, which is unthinkable in any industrial nation, East or West, illustrates some of the differences between the roles of students in different societies.

#### *Nationalist Leaders*

In many of the new nations, students have had a long political tradition. In Latin America, students have had a constitutional voice in university administration for more than a generation, and are recognized as legitimate participants in political affairs. A number of important Latin American political leaders, men such as Victor Raul Haya de la Torre, founder of the leftist APRA party of Peru, and Romulo Betancourt, former President of Venezuela, came from the student movement.

In other areas, students were instrumental in independence struggles, and have never lost their radical nationalist inclinations. In Burma, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, and parts of Africa, students provided left wing leadership to nationalist movements, and a generation of leaders was trained in these student movements.

Although many newly independent nations have tried to curtail student political involvement (Burma's military government went so far as to close the university for an extended period and

destroyed the Student Union building with artillery), they have not met with notable success. These traditions of political activity have, for the most part, remained strong although there are indications that as political life becomes increasingly institutionalized and participation is extended to broader segments of the population, the importance of student movements will diminish. For the present, however, they remain powerful forces in many areas.

### *The Student World*

Students in many nations are among the easier groups in the society to organize for any purpose. The student population is often relatively small and homogeneous. Class and ethnic backgrounds tend to be rather similar, although trends toward broadening the base of higher education are evident in many areas. Furthermore, the student population is usually highly concentrated. In many nations, one major university centre may contain up to half of the student population.

An organizational nexus often exists, usually centred around a strong national union of students. These factors enable student leaders to mobilize demonstrations quickly and efficiently. Complicated newspapers and radio stations are unnecessary; all that is needed is a mimeograph machine, and a few posters strategically placed, to mobilize massive student demonstrations.

In addition to a tradition of political participation and an effective organizational base, students often have a strong ideological commitment. Usually expres-

sed in leftist terms with strong nationalist overtones, this ideological basis permits student movements to function, although at a reduced level of activity, during periods of political quiescence. This fact insures some degree of organizational continuity—student movements do not have to start anew at every crisis.

Furthermore, the students are often considered among the “purest” elements of the society. Unencumbered by outside responsibilities to family, party, etc.—and in a sense alienated from traditional social patterns—students are uniquely able to speak for other emergent modern elements in the society such as the organized working class or peasant movements. As a result, the student organizations often speak for no more than a few thousand students in the university, but give voice to the demands of an increasingly important segment of the society.

### *Catalysts for Change*

Since both modern universities and the nationalist-oriented governments of the new nations are essentially urban phenomena, the students have a disproportionate influence on the direction of national policies. The countryside is characteristically uninvolved in political activity, thus giving city elements an overwhelming voice. And student movements, as a very visible and usually vocal part of the urban environment, share in this emphasis.

Even in the developing nations, students have been unable to retain political initiative once they have acted as a catalyst for political change. Almost invariably, students act as an instrumental

element in social struggles which are taken over by some other element, often the military.

Indeed, this rather unexpected tacit cooperation between radical student movements and the military in a growing number of developing nations may be highly significant for future political developments. The fact remains, however, that even where students have unquestioned political impact, they can do little more than precipitate changes which others must implement.

Japan offers a particularly interesting example of student political involvement. In a nation which has entered the industrial age with a vengeance, but still retains many aspects of its traditional past, the student movement has indicated something of the ambivalence which exists in the society. Considered ideologically and morally uncorrupted by many, the students have tried to speak for the working class and other "voiceless" elements in the society, sometimes with notable success.

Yet, because of its alienation from many traditional aspects of the culture, the students have been unable to build ongoing support from other elements in the society; and when specific agitational campaigns ended, they found themselves virtually alone. Japan offers an interesting contrast to the Western industrialized nations, since students in Japan still retain some of their traditional importance, at least in the high prestige universities, and have a crucial political role as a "link" between still inarticulate masses and the mainstream of political life.

These rather general comments indicate some of the reasons why students in

specific nations can, despite the fact that they are seemingly weak, without arms, and relatively few in numbers, have so much impact on political events. Their importance can hardly be overestimated, although the difficulty of predicting student actions remains a thorny problem. The anti-Communist direction of the Indonesian students recently, although partially understandable in the light of hindsight, could hardly have been predicted even by experienced observers.

Student political participation is characterized by volatility as well as by rapid shifts in direction. Perhaps all that can be said is that there is a strong tradition of usually leftist student political involvement in many developing nations, and that this activity is often of crucial importance.

#### *The Student in Technological Societies*

The industrialized nations of Europe and North America offer a particularly graphic contrast to this picture which has been presented. While it is only possible to allude to the important differences which are apparent here, it is clear that these differences in political and educational environment help to determine the direction and nature of student political activity.

In the United States, and in most of Europe, students do not constitute a crucial element in the political equation. In technological societies, the fate of a group of students, or even an entire student generation, is not of vital importance. Individual students, while potential members of the elite, are not

necessarily destined for elite status.

In America, and for that matter in most nations with a growing system of higher education open to larger numbers of students, the political activities of individual groups of students will have less overall significance, and it will be more difficult to successfully organize mass student demonstrations. In general, strongly career-oriented students are not often attracted to student politics, and this segment of the student population is increasing numerically, particularly as greater stress is placed on the natural sciences.

A tradition of student political involvement is an important element in shaping the student community in any given country. In nations like India or Japan, which have strong traditions of student political involvement and organization stretching back for almost a half century, it is easier to organize an agitational campaign. Moreover student participation in politics is expected and the broader population considers such participation legitimate. In Latin America, since the great Reform movement of 1918, students have been expected to take part in the political developments of their nations.

In the more advanced technological societies, and indeed in most societies with firmly established political infrastructures, student movements have tended to play only a minor role. Various pressure groups, articulate public opinion, and such organizations as labour unions make the students much less important than in societies in which they are one of the few articulate elements.

Students in the Communist nations

can have a greater impact on their societies as has been shown in East Germany, Poland, and Hungary in recent years, than Western students can have for the simple reason that when they become involved politically, they are filling a vacuum created by the lack of an effective opposition.

As political life in the developing countries becomes more normalized, and as legitimate authority structures take hold, it is likely that the students will gradually lose much of their potency.

#### *A Unique Responsibility*

Students in the developing countries have both a unique responsibility and a unique power. They, perhaps more than any other element in their societies, have the social vision and the modern education to see beyond present, often difficult, reality. This ideological sophistication and political consciousness have led students to take an active political role in their societies.

Activism, however, must be tempered with a sense of realism. Sporadic demonstrations without any discernible goals, such as have been taking place in India and elsewhere, have led neither to improvement in the educational system nor to social reforms. Student activism must, therefore, have carefully formulated goals and use means which are commensurate with its aims.

It would seem that student movements have the largest role to play in the formulation of educational policy, and in the area of university reform. Students are, after all, deeply involved in the university and should have a voice in its

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affairs. Up to now, however, students have more often been concerned with broader social issues than with the affairs of their own universities. Student involvement in university reform can play both an important and a very useful role in the development of higher education not only in the developing nations, but in the industrialized nations as well.

In a very real sense, students are responsible for the futures of their countries, for they constitute an incipient elite. The ambivalence between political

activism and competent professionalism is felt in many of the developing countries. Politically responsible and ideologically sophisticated student movements can constitute a valuable addition to the modernization process.

Governments have too often looked upon students as a threat rather than an ally in social and political progress. With able student leadership and support from government and educational officials, student movements can make a real contribution.

# FOUR POEMS

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ARCHEIBALD MACLEISH

*The first two of the following poems are reprinted from Mr. MacLeish's "Collected Poems, 1917-1952," published by Houghton Mifflin Company. The latter two are from his recent "The Wild Old Wicked Man and Other Poems," published in the United States by Houghton Mifflin and in the British Commonwealth by W.H. Allen & Company. The title poem appeared originally in the August 10, 1968 issue of "Saturday Review."*

## Ars Poetica

A poem should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit,

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb,

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds.

\* \* \*

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs,

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Leaving, as the moon releases  
Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs.

\* \* \*

A poem should be equal to:  
Not true.

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean  
But be.

### Music and Drum

When men turn mob  
Drums throb:  
When mob turns men  
Music again.

When souls become Church  
Drums beat the search:  
When Church becomes souls  
Sweet music tolls.

When State is the master  
Drums beat disaster:  
When master is man  
Music can.

FOUR POEMS

Each to be one,  
Each to be whole,  
Body and soul,  
Music's begun.

Late Abed

Ah, but a good wife!  
To lie late in a warm bed  
(warm where she was) with your life  
suspended like a music in the head,  
hearing her foot in the house, her broom  
on the pine floor of the down-stairs room,  
hearing the window toward the sun go up,  
the tap turned on, the tap turned off,  
the saucer clatter to the coffee cup...

To lie late in the odour of coffee  
thinking of nothing at all, listening...

and she moves here, she moves there,  
and your mouth hurts still where last she kissed you:  
you think how she looked as she left, the bare  
thigh, and went to her adorning...

You lie there listening and she moves—  
prepares her house to hold another morning,  
prepares another day to hold her loves...

You lie there  
thinking of nothing  
watching the sky...

“The Wild Old Wicked Man”

Too old for love and still to love!—  
Yeats's predicament and mine—all men's:  
the aging Adam who must strut and shove  
and caper his obscene pretense...

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And yet, within the dry thorn grove,  
singer to singer in the dusk, there cries  
(Listen! Ah, listen, the wood dove!)  
something conclusion never satisfies;

and still when day ends and the wind goes down  
and not a tree stirs, not a leaf,  
some passion in the sea beats on  
and on...

(Oh, listen, the sea reef!)

Too old for love and still to long...  
for what? For one more flattering proof  
the flesh lives and the beast is strong?—  
once more upon the pulse that hammering hoof?

Or is there something the persistent dove,  
the ceaseless surges and the old man's lust  
all know and cannot say? Is love  
what nothing concludes, nothing must,  
pure certainty?

And does the passionate man  
most nearly know it when no passion can?  
Is this the old man's triumph, to pursue  
impossibility—and take it too?

# THE POET AND THE AGE

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IRVING SABLOSKY

## An Interview With Archibald MacLeish

*The relationship of poetry to politics is a subject on which Archibald MacLeish can speak with some experience. As a poet he has received major awards. As a public servant he was Librarian of Congress and Assistant Secretary of State in the 1940s. Later he became Boylston Professor of English at Harvard University and then Robert Frost's successor in a chair created for the late poet at Amherst College. Now semi-retired, he emerges occasionally to lecture or read his newest poems, or to give an interview like the following one conducted by Irving Sablosky.*

*Mr. MacLeish, some years ago you wrote in a tone of some disdain that the American artist didn't engage in politics even to defend himself and his freedom as an artist. Do you feel that's still true? And should it be?*

I've felt for the last 30 or 35 years that there is simply no escape in an essentially political era from the political world. There was an attempt that became very marked in American criticism, in the revulsion against the socially conscious thirties, to put a wall of some kind between the art of poetry and the facts of politics. I've felt pretty strongly that it was a misguided attempt, that you can't

do it, and you shouldn't do it.

Poetry, as poetry, ought to be able to deal with any experience that is human, and the political experience is certainly human. No man interested, as the poet must be, in the life of the society to which he belongs can possibly ignore it.

*What can the poet do as a poet? Doesn't this raise the old issue of art vs. propaganda?*

You mean the idea that poetry that concerns itself too much with the political life—which is necessarily the life of conflict—inevitably becomes propaganda. This all depends on how good the poet is.

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After all, Yeats becomes a great poet at the very moment when, as Louis MacNeice said, he began to use the English language as though it meant business—which is the precise period at which he began to commit himself actively to Irish politics. And not only to commit himself to them, but to take action in them, and to use his poems, as he does in *Responsibilities*, as weapons.

I've never heard anybody dismiss *Responsibilities* as propaganda. I think this has also been true in more recent times. It's true certainly of the poetry of Paul Eluard who was constantly involved in the political ferment of France.

I think what you *do* about it is a matter of your own personal responsibility, that is, the responsibility of working out a position, finding out what you really believe, and putting your own belief ahead of the fashions of the time. What irritates me most about the development of literature in this country in recent years is the extent to which modishness and voguishness have imposed themselves on writers who accept them like sheep, lining up on the "right side" of the "right issues," although you know, if you know these writers as men, that they are *not* sheep.

They accept the "tragic" view of life, they accept the "absurd" view of life, almost unquestioningly and unthinkingly. They say, "This is the reality, this is the hard look which people before have hesitated to take." You hear this from people who really don't feel that way at all. You know them as men, and you know that they don't really believe life is absurd; they don't *act* that way. They don't really believe that life is hopelessly tragic (in the

wrong sense of the word "tragic"). They don't believe any of it, yet they accept it as writers and proceed from it.

Now Andre Malraux is a perfectly good example of the opposite. Malraux has never been modish or voguish, although there was a time when his anti-fascism fitted in with the then fashionable French Communism. You remember he said that he "married" France at the time of the Resistance. From that moment he put a commitment to France and to what France stands for in his mind, first, and he has not hesitated to act on that belief. Now you find him writing his *Anti-memoirs* on the basis of that belief. I wish there were a few more Malraux in this country.

*Do we have any parallels in the United States? I think of yourself, of course....*

No, no, I've never been as actively concerned as he was—I've been active in other ways, but he was a man who threw himself in front of the engine wheels. Maybe the closest we've come is Ernest Hemingway, though Hemingway's "involvement" was more adventurous than political.

When the Spanish civil war started, Hemingway and John Dos Passos and I made a film about the war, with the Dutch film-maker Joris Ivens as director: *The Spanish Earth*. Hemingway went to Spain to write the script. But he did more than write; he got shot at and he did some shooting. Then in World War Two, he was in Normandy as a correspondent after the landing, and again he involved himself with the hardware. He "took part", you might say, but not as Malraux

did who was acting out of conviction; rather in a spirit of adventure.

But to come back—if ever a society needed to be *comprehended* in the sense in which a poem can comprehend, it is ours now. This country desperately needs to recover a belief in itself, a sense of its own dignity. You have to look very hard at contemporary literature to find anything that will help.

*But writers have always been opposers. You yourself wrote that a writer always carries on a running quarrel with his time. Is there difference on this score, say between the 1930's and the 1960's?*

There was, of course, in the thirties, a great deal of satiric writing, a lively dislike of American capitalism in operation—a great deal of it, violently put, powerfully put. But there was at the same time, and with it, a belief in the American people, *as people*—proletariat, if you want (there is, actually, no such thing as an American proletariat). Carl Sandburg's *The People, Yes!* has it.

And there was, secondly, not only a belief but a basic *assumption* that something could be done about the social collapse—the Depression. Just as it was possible for the New Deal to do something about the economic system, reconstruct it and build a new economics—just so, it was possible for a poet, a writer, an artist to conceive of a good society in place of the flawed society he saw around him.

But that's gone—the question isn't even raised these days: "Can you do anything about it?" Well, the answer seems to be "Let's knock it down first and then

find out."

*You feel then that the artist has an obligation to offer some positive vision?*

I don't know if he has an "obligation," but I don't see how he can avoid it. After all, his concern is with the human situation, that's what he cares about.

This time we live in seems to me one of the most remarkable, one of the most demanding of which we have any record. It is exciting and demanding for reasons which lie on two sides of the problem: one, because human society—not only in this country but throughout the world—is going through a critical change of a kind which we can talk about but which we cannot yet define. At the same time there never has been a period when men were as self-conscious as we are now. We watch ourselves in the mirror all the time, we poke at our psyches, we pick the scabs off our souls, we're concerned with ourselves.

Now, this is a way of saying that ours is a time which needs the arts, needs poetry (used as a word for all the arts) as no age ever has before. It needs to see itself—and how else are you going to see yourself than in the arts? The psychiatrists? If you go to the psychiatrists, you find them quoting poems!

*How does the poet get at this—through his poems, or by taking direct political action? If he enters public life, doesn't a tension arise between his official role and his art? Perhaps you can speak in terms of your own experience.*

Well, you know, I became Librarian

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of Congress when I was about 45, then Assistant Secretary of State when I was 50, roughly, and the rest of my State Department work was while I was in my fifties. By that age you're pretty well crystallized as what you are, whatever it is you are, and I had ceased to think of myself as having two hats or two suits of clothes: there was only one way to act.

Also, the period of my public service was for the most part in the very crucial years before, during and after the war. These were periods in which problems presented themselves in human terms—in emotional terms—and I never even attempted to deal with them in terms other than those which come naturally to me, which are the terms of the human emotions.

As Assistant Secretary of State I was responsible for the preparation of the 1945 San Francisco Conference which organized the United Nations. The only way I could see to deal with the proposed U.N. was explicitly in terms of the great hope for mankind that was being worked out there—instead of trying to say, that's a fine idea, but now let's talk about the realities, the practical realities of political manoeuvre. I can't do that now and didn't know how to do it then.

So there was for me, no tension or contradiction between artist and official. I think whether you're in the public world or sitting down here in the back of a house on a hill, you have to deal with the world in the terms that come naturally to you—which are the terms, in the case of any artist, of his art. There's no other way he can deal with it.

Which brings us back to your question—how does the poet get at the politi-

cal problem? Don't you feel that with the arts your concern is always with the individual? You aren't concerned with masses of men except as they are involved in individual human situations. You're concerned with what our ancestors used to call the human soul, and that is an individual phenomenon. The minute you try to deal with the human soul in statistical terms, or the kind of terms the sociologists use, you cease to deal with what is your primary business—and at that point I suppose you become a propagandist.

*Do any particular forms strike you as peculiarly appropriate for a poetic expression of this time? The verse drama, for example, seems to be a form you turn to—in fact, you are one of the few who still do.*

I think the appropriateness of that form is really outside of time or fashion. I would make a distinction between theatre and drama. *Theatre* can range from entertainment, which is what theatre ordinarily is, into the area occupied by the novel: that is, dealing with domestic situations or other peculiar situations between people. Theatre belongs—must belong—to its own time. It must be in fashion or it won't work as either social commentary or entertainment.

*Drama* is something else. Drama is outside time as poetry is. Fashionable drama is as unthinkable as fashionable poetry. Indeed drama is poetry in its essentials—figurative, expressive, active poetry. It requires poetry to reach its purposes. I can't imagine a time when poetic drama won't be fruitful and

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necessary. The dramatist who writes real drama is necessarily writing poetry, regardless of the rhythmic form. People used to talk about the poetry of Tennessee Williams' plays, meaning a kind of lyricism. Actually the good ones were poetic in a realer sense. So was Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. It worked on a poetic level: the level of fatality.

But let me go back to the first part of your question. It seems to me the possibilities offered by contemporary electronics are still largely unexplored, and they offer a most important opportunity for a poet. I was struck by this in the thirties, when I began writing verse plays for radio —here was a medium which lent itself entirely to an approach through words. Words in radio do everything. You don't see anything. The words paint the scene, they present the characters, they move you by their rhythm.

We had begun to have a very considerable literature in verse dramas for radio, both in England and here, when television came along and killed the hope. Because once you have been able to see, no human being would be willing to stop seeing—to "merely" hear. So the words were deprived of their stage.

But television certainly has possibilities that haven't been explored. For my money, nobody has yet written a television play. Somebody's got to invent the form. What you get now are imitations on television of films or of stage plays. But there must be, there just must be somewhere, a *television* play, a play which will exist only in television, which only television can deal with. And because the screen is so small—because the limitations for the eye are so great—here again

the word is going to...not reoccupy the centre of the stage as it did with radio, but it's going to play a much larger part.

*Don't you at this point come up against the problem of mass culture? Or do you see it as a problem?*

If you think about the nature of a television play, what should a television play *be* that a stage play or a film play isn't? If you try to free your mind of all preconceptions and think about it *de novo*, you are bound, I think, to come up with this as your first conclusion: that the television play, unlike the stage play and the film play, will *not* have "an audience." It is addressed to one man sitting in a chair, looking. There may be two in the room or three, but they don't interact with each other; they're not an "audience."

You put a play on the stage and if it goes, the miracle is the thing that happens out beyond the footlights, the involvement of the audience. (That's as old as Aristotle, it's not new with the current advocates of "involvement," who want to get the audience literally into the performance.) But with a television play, there is no audience. The two or three people in the room don't relate to each other. There are not enough of them to make an emotional echo that's going to come back at you. You are dealing with *one person*. And the fact that there are, conceivably, millions of people looking at the same moment won't change the fact that the play exists between the screen *there* and one man in the chair *here*.

This means that the television screen cannot deal with mass values. It can't concern itself with mass reactions and

mass problems; it is concerned with one man—one man in this kind of society, yes, but one man. I think that's the real answer as far as television is concerned.

*Have you followed the vein of "folk poetry" that has become so prevalent in the last few years—the songs of Bob Dylan, or Richie Havens and the like?*

No, I haven't. I hear people talk about it, but I haven't heard it as you ought to hear it, with the guitar and so forth. If you look at the verse on the page, it's drivel; but I'm perfectly willing to believe something else happens when it is performed. After all, if you read the Beatles'—what is it? *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Band*?—if you read the lyrics of that record... well, it's pretty vapid. But if you listen to it, it has powers of elevation: you find yourself lifted.

*Has anyone ever suggested that your play J.B., could be interpreted as a kind of hippie testament—I mean, because of the idea that all that remains to us in this world is each other, our love for one another?*

I feel the greatest admiration—more than admiration—awe and wonder, about the flower children and their courage. I'm not talking about their courage vis-a-vis the police or merely the unorthodoxy of their dress and behaviour, but their courage in explicitly confessing to states of mind that, in our society, particularly the Anglo-Saxon part of American society, have never been confessed to before. That is, their willingness to commit

themselves to love. (Oh, you can drop a footnote to yourself and doubt whether they know what love is, but then that doubt is also in question—because they do make sacrifices for it.)

I never thought of a connection between the flower children point of view and *J.B.*, because *J.B.* occupies a somewhat more Stoic position. It concludes with the same conclusion that the Book of Job itself concludes with, which is the one the clerics always refuse to admit. Job gets everything back in the end, you may recall. God gives him everything—twice as many camels, twice as many oxen, a whole new family of children, daughters who are called the most beautiful of the daughters of Judah. Well, the miracle, of course, is that Job—after the horror and agony he has lived through—accepts it at God's hands; takes it all *back* to live through again.

This is what first drew me to the Book of Job, for this is the truth about mankind. After the horrors we have lived through in my lifetime—two huge wars, and a vast corruption of values in the Depression and again now, and several minor wars that would have been big wars in any other age—in spite of all this, and in spite of the losses, the massacres, the exterminations, we still take it all back again and go on. We love life in spite of life. And this is not a peculiarity of our time; it is a peculiarity of mankind. That's not, I think, part of the hippie point of view—I don't think they savour the Stoic aspect of it.

But that they are willing to put love as the first value in the world... well, they have more things in common with the early Christians than long hair!

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*I gather, then, you are not so anxious about the younger generation as some others are.*

I think the current talk about the "generation gap" and the antagonism between generations is mindless twaddle. In so far as it exists it is not in any way peculiar to our age. The animosities that are discussed under that head have been familiar in human history from the beginning of time. Fathers have been killed by sons ever since Oedipus (and long before), and the hostility between father and son and between mothers and daughters has been the subject of the oldest comedy laughs in all literature. It's just not true that this is a peculiar phenomenon of our time, and we ought to stop talking about it as though it were.

What we should recognize is the fact that this generation of youngsters is by the common testimony of those who have taught them the most remarkable generation that has come along. They're

extremely intelligent, and they're much more honest with themselves than we were. I think some aspects of their political behaviour are pretty childish—to call yourself a revolutionary when you have no idea what you want a revolution for is not only to misuse words but to abuse yourself. It's infantile; it's like a child kicking, scrambling, and breaking the china. That's not worthy of very serious thought.

But these young people have a right to talk about the hypocrisy of the elders, because they're honest with themselves. They are walking into a hell of a time, for reasons that we're all familiar with. I mean not only the ostensible reasons, the racial tensions and others in this country; they're coming into a world in which the whole position of man as man is in question. Everybody feels uncertain, not at ease. They are in difficulties, these young people, and they have a call on all the sympathy and understanding they can get.

# THE MODERN ARTIST AND SOCIETY

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HAROLD ROSENBERG

*Art critic for "The New Yorker," Mr. Rosenberg coined the term "action painting" to characterize the New York School that centred around Jackson Pollack and Willem de Kooning. His essays on painting, poetry, drama, and popular culture are collected in "The Tradition of the New"; his poems in "Trance Above the Streets."*

*In the following article he considers sympathetically recent trends in painting and sculpture, with special attention to the increasing popularity of modern art and the decreasing separation of the advanced artist from his society.*

THE CREATIONS that have struck deepest into the public imagination as typical of the past 20 years in American art reveal an unmistakable impulse to erupt into the life around them.

Paintings are metamorphosed into free-standing cutouts, collect into themselves articles from the refuse pile or the dime store. Sculptures crawl along the floor, join the collector's family at the dinner table, are electrified to blink on and off, emit sounds.

Today's art is not merely shown; it puts on a show and solicits audience participation. Action paintings invite the spectator's engagement in the artist's creative act. Along with active art appears the artist-actor. In "happenings" painters and sculptors build props, compose scenes and perform.

Exhibitions endeavour to provide a total setting or, in the jargon of the art world, an "environment." The spectator is transported into a staged situation where he is enveloped by the art work rather than confronted by it. At times he becomes part of the artist's composition and himself a work of art—a game of ambiguities commented on with incomparable brilliance in Saul Steinberg's drawings for popular magazines.

The performance of present-day artists as showmen to the crowds of the new American art world has induced some people to conclude that painting and sculpture have lost their bearings and are about to vanish into mass entertainment. The fact is, however, that art, as action and performances by painters, embodies the principle of continuity that

links together the vanguard art movements of the past 50 years.

The impulse to turn from the art *object* to the art *event* is present in the Dada and Surrealist demonstrations in post-World War I Paris, in the political placards, May Day floats and educational murals of the 1930's (with their slogan "Art Is A Weapon"), in the interweavings of thrown pigment and fierce brush slashes of the American Action Painters.

#### *Social Theme and Creativity*

The character of a performance is determined by its audience—or by the absence of an audience. The story of American art in the past 20 years is outlined by the retreat of the Abstract Expressionist painters and sculptors from the street and the public place to the studio, and the gradual re-emergence of these artists and their successors into the contemporary landscape of mass communications, standard commodities and the laboratory.

Almost all the originators of America's abstract art had been steeped in the political art of the Depression years. Jackson Pollock had been influenced by left-wing Mexican mural painting; Mark Rothko had composed tableaux of the city poor; Willem de Kooning had executed constructions for Artist Union demonstrations. The abstract sign-making and art as gesture which this generation of artists introduced after the war arose from a need to redirect bohemian and radical social action into the controllable arena of the canvas.

Instead of conceiving the contempo-

rary in art as that which conveyed the social theme favoured at the moment, these Americans were led to restore contact with the tradition of formal innovation which had spurred painting and sculpture since Impressionism. They turned especially toward the last of the vanguard European movements, Dada and Surrealism, both of which were dedicated to transforming man as well as society.

The crux of the matter—as Hans Hofmann, the great artist-teacher who had taken refuge in America from Hitler, had been insisting all through the 1930's in his influential art school—was that art must be *creative*. Merely to apply existing styles and techniques to the subject matter of radical politics produces not painting but illustration, and with regard to art is reactionary. The hope for the artist lay not in finding a new formula for "stylizing" objects or ideas but in entering into the historic stream of creative activity, whether carried on by the Florentine masters or the witch doctors of the Congo.

#### *Revelation through Action*

Having shed their social aims and their stylistic preconceptions, the American Abstract Expressionists sought revelations through fusing into the movement of the brush the energies inherent in nature, the artist, the materials with which he worked. In the interval of painting the artist affirmed his identity on levels of experience extending from his self-awareness as an artist, his absorption in the art of the past, his feelings as an individual, his half-conscious

intimations.

The movements of hand and body brought into being a coherence of signs to which both he and the spectator could respond with fresh movements of the imagination. As stated by de Kooning, form in art is derived from the life of the artist, and this reaches its highest pitch in the act of painting. The impassioned swipes of de Kooning's brush carry the same life-content in an abstraction as in the figure of a woman.

While the new American abstract art of the first postwar decade was the product neither of a school nor of an ideology, its motive of creative action gave rise to certain common aesthetic features. Since the painting or sculpture was regarded not as an end in itself but as an incident in the artist's continuous activity of creation, its nature was to be "unfinished," a condition characteristically expressed in sketchy composition, blank areas of canvas, messy surfaces. Pre-conceived ideas and even a definite style were shunned as fixing the artist in a vise of self-repetition.

"Formulation of belief has a way of losing its brightness and of fencing one in," wrote Bradley Tomlin. Artists sought forms carrying multiple meanings. A favourite metaphor described the artist as functioning "inside the picture," as if it were a place of combat—a figure of speech which Pollock carried out literally by spreading his canvas on the studio floor.

In rejecting the social muse, American abstract art had renounced the existing art public and, it seemed to many, every quality that could make painting meaningful outside the circle of the

artists themselves. Press comment on the new work found it sufficient to revive the old saw about paintings executed by a donkey's tail—later, the donkey was superseded by the chimpanzee.

Orphaned from the European art movements to which Americans had habitually looked for authority, lacking any objective sense of purpose, the artists were aware of playing to empty galleries or, as the line of Apollinaire which one critic applied to them put it, "making gestures in the solitudes."

The sentiment of isolation was heightened by the fact that a sizeable proportion of the Abstract Expressionist artists—Hofmann, Gorky, de Kooning, Rothko, Gottlieb, Guston, Nakian, Hague—were new or second-generation Americans. Plunged into the anonymity of New York, affiliated with no ethnic community, most of them already in their 40's, without income or financial prospects, their situation bordered on the void. They were estranged not only from their fellowmen but from things. They required from art not only a career but a life.

Yet their art was not fashioned to be seductive and it elicited a response only from a handful of survivors of prewar Paris circles and from artists in neighbouring tenements and lofts. With them the problem of the artist in the contemporary world achieved its most drastic formulation. Desperation, questioning of art and its function, tentativeness were their watchwords. No wonder their creations, devoid of local or national reference, were in time to appeal to solitary individuals everywhere, in particular among the "new people" who had risen to the surface in postwar England,

Italy, Japan, Latin America.

### *An Accessible Sign Language*

It seems fitting that the first original art style produced in the United States should have emanated from undissolved individuals in its melting pot. The art which those in comfortable situations deplored as meaningless was full of meaning for the person who examined himself, his powers and his fate in the mirror of actual experience.

This response, it turned out, was not rare. Once the shock of the unfamiliar images had been absorbed, the new abstract art proved to contain a sign language accessible to persons of many different cultural backgrounds. Thus while "art for the people" had never succeeded in becoming truly popular, the so-called private art of the abstractionists entered into the consciousness of hundreds of thousands and initiated the acceptance of painting and sculpture as living factors of American public life and education.

Within a decade after notice had been taken of the "gestures in the solitudes" of American abstract art, the U. S. art world had swelled to include hundreds of galleries, collectors large and small, travelling exhibitions, university art departments and museums, visiting artists and lecturers, as well as art editors, curators, biographers, publishers, columnists, interviewers, TV and radio programmers.

The recruitment of a Vanguard audience for painting and sculpture was bound to transform the conditions of their creation and, in time, the character

of the work itself. In its presence, the notion of putting on a show developed a stronger appeal than the act of painting in the privacy of the studio.

### *Rivers, Rauschenberg and Johns*

Among the first to turn significantly from mythologizing abstraction was Larry Rivers, who in his "Washington Crossing the Delaware" undertook a truly popular subject, one he could count on to exist in the mind of every grade school graduate. Both with his provocative nudes and with his "history paintings," Rivers was a forerunner in bringing back into art the common man (or in recognizing that he was already there)—not in the form of a political abstraction, as in the posters and murals of the 1930's, but as one who, like the artist, found pleasure in picture and exaltation in the notion of a masterpiece. Through painting the commonly known and commonly appealing, Rivers provided a link between Action Painting and the "New Realist" or "Pop" Art of street images and everyday objects: signs, ads, food, appliances.

Other links were the paintings and sculptures of Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. While Rivers took from Abstract Expressionism only what satisfied his sense of drama, Rauschenberg and Johns re-examined this mode through the eyes of its audience. For the majority of the new art lovers, they noted, drips and slashes of pigment had become aesthetic tokens as commonplace and taken for granted as a Coca-Cola bottle or the pattern of the American flag.

To underline the visual anaesthesia of

the crowds at art openings, Rauschenberg displayed four empty canvases fastened together; and to spoof the false claims of spontaneity of the mass of Action Painters he executed two pictures composed of identical "accidents" of dripping and thrown paint.

For his part, Johns painted flags, targets, numbers and other omnipresent symbols with the bravura of one risking himself to instinct. The audience-conscious art of Rivers, Rauschenberg and Johns was the pivot on which painting and sculpture swung from exploring the artist's own mind to analyzing and manipulating the mind of its public.

#### *Challenge of the Man-Made*

With the audience acknowledged as a factor on every plane of the artist's situation, American art has become engaged in accommodating itself to its new position *in society*. As in the 1930's, artists have been taking account of the powers that control their environment.

Most directly pressing upon art for more than a century has been the presence of art's gargantuan double, commercial art—including printed and display advertising, industrial design, product packaging, teaching aids, visual entertainment from the comic book to the movie screen.

Commercial art *is* art, not only in the sense of being received as such by most people but of belonging to a tradition—one might almost say *the* tradition—of making art that moves its beholders and satisfies their tastes. In contemporary America this art surrounds us to an unprecedented degree—the container in the refrigerator and the building

"complex" derive from the same aesthetic sources. Here "Nature" has been replaced by the man-made. Our imaginations have been formed by images, objects and landscapes conceived by highly competent professionals to fulfill pre-planned programmes of persuasion and/or entertainment.

Endlessly versatile, the commercial crafts appropriate from painting each new style, "look" or device and adapt it to serve practical ends never intended by its originator, as in the calendars made of Monets, linoleum designs of Mondrians. At the same time, commercial art constantly challenges painting and sculpture to state what purpose they serve and why they should continue to hold their ancient privileges.

The artist's revenge has been to exploit for his own artistic ends the ever-present art of machine-produced objects and machine-reproduced images. Since 50 years ago, when Marcel Duchamp presented his "ready mades"—shovels, toilet bowls, window frames—and the Cubists pasted bus transfers, theatre announcements and newsphotos into their compositions, the creations of the artist and of the business-world artisan have tended to crossbreed; at times their products have come so closely together as to be distinguishable only by the label and the place of display.

It is to the credit of Pop Art that it brought this relationship between art and mass manufacture and communication into the open without fear of overstepping the line between the canvas and the poster, the mural and the billboard. Pop artists are primarily craftsmen. With them the studio is no longer the cell of

the philosopher or the lair of the romantic "wild beast;" it has reverted to the workshop of the artisan equipped to carry out projects with efficiency and skill.

But though the Pop artist adopts the artisan approach of the worker in the mass media, he does not relinquish the independence of the "expressionist." He manufactures an image, but according to his own idea. The freedom retained by the Pop artist in handling cultural stereotypes automatically lends to Pop an air of irony. He has chosen to function simultaneously on two planes: the plane of mass-communication styles and techniques and the plane of vanguard art.

Another currently popular movement, "optical" painting or Op Art attacks the subjective individualism of Abstract Expressionism from the standpoint of scientific objectivity. Its "old master," Joseph Albers, asserts that in painting today "*Angst* (fearful anxiety) is dead." The proponents of these patterned designs in squares, circles, moire claim that they alone represent a "machine-age aesthetic," which celebrates not men but forces. Its spirit is diametrically opposed to the humanism of de Kooning or Hofmann.

#### *The Power of Science*

Op Art is far more extreme than Pop in subjugating art to the social power, this time the power of science. In it the billboard has been exchanged for the optometrical chart. With its nervous mechanics of line and colour and its waving and quaking surfaces, there is something harsh and didactic about these works, even when their effect upon the eye is soothing.

Their light is neither of the day nor the night but of neon. There is a prevailing atmosphere of a locked room and of things spied through an aperture.

Since Uccello and Leonardo nearly five centuries ago, Western artists have given themselves to disciplined researches into visible nature. Impressionism, for instance, owed much to painting hypotheses linked to the laboratory. Perhaps the qualitative difference between the Op artists and their predecessors lies in the fact that science in the atomic age is less "natural" than it used to be. In any case, emphasizing sensation, Op Art lacks the imaginative vigour that sustained Action Painting for almost two decades.

Yet Op has also its softer, human side, as opposed to the didactic and the mechanical. Like Pop, Op leans toward mass entertainment. It is public art in contrast to the personalism of Abstract Expressionism. Op and Pop meet in the new science-fiction sculpture, in toys, and in art that resembles fairground and circus exhibits. The repertory of illusionistic tricks displayed in the flickering and blazing of kinetic paintings turns an Op exhibition into a hippodrome of "magicians."

No species of American art has been more attractive to children, and no art of the past 20 years has been greeted with more acclaim by people who admire an artist who "knows what he is doing." Op arouses, too, the enthusiasm of people who are convinced that art as such has no place in the rational and technological world of tomorrow. They see in Op an early phase of the liquidation of the traditional arts into "programmed" effects delivered by film and tape—a

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"theatre of the senses."

### *Trends and Portents*

Today, the entire range of art forms developed in this century and earlier is in vigorous operation in the American art world. The trend of painting towards performance and experiment rather than the making of pictures according to some ideal model is striking in its continuity. All traditional aesthetic elements and values are now subject to tampering. This trend, however, is crossed by countertrends and by efforts to hold the line of art in the traditional sense against the danger of liquidation. Portrait painting, figure painting, landscapes, post-Cubist constructions, even genre painting and allegory are to be found on display any day in New York's extensive gallery

district.

What should be the limit of tampering with the inherited ingredients of art has become a matter for each artist to decide. Is it legitimate to paste bits of newspaper or cloth into a painting or to affix to it sheets of cut out metal, but forbidden to insert a TV set into it or suspend from it a pair of boots or the head of a goat?

The issue seems less pressing today than it was some decades ago. American art has absorbed the most extreme devices of 20th century avant-gardism, and while doing so has grown more, rather than less, popular. More portentous for the future than the possibility of exceeding the limits of formal experiment is the ending of that separation between the advanced artist and society which has been the rule for more than a hundred years.

# ART IN 1969: ONE CRITIC'S VIEW

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LILY LEINO

## An Interview with Clement Greenberg

*In a markedly different style from Mr. Rosenberg's, and from a different stance, Mr. Greenberg discusses in the following interview conducted by Lily Leino the origins and development of American contemporary art, the difference between major and minor art (the latter so often more immediately popular), and the role of the artist in society.*

*Art critic, painter, author of many essays and books, among them "Joan Miro," "Matisse," "Art and Culture," and "Hofmann," Mr. Greenberg visited Japan in 1966 and India in 1967 under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, and in 1968 lectured in Australia at the invitation of the University of Sydney and in New Zealand for its Arts Council.*

*Mr. Greenberg, you are known as one of the earliest champions of advanced American art. What were some of the factors that contributed to its breakthrough during and after World War II?*

One thing I do know is that artists in New York during the latter 1930's tried harder, informed themselves more about what was going on elsewhere—especially in Paris—than artists in Paris itself did in those years.

I was in Paris for the first time in the spring of 1939 and was somewhat startled

by how unknowing the few younger artists I met there were by comparison with their counterparts in New York. In New York at that time the younger artists on 8th Street—especially those who had some contact with Hans Hofmann, even if they weren't his students—were looking at everything and at the same time bearing down on themselves.

They knew Matisse better than he was known in Europe and, as I think, valued him more. They knew Klee, they knew Miro, they knew Mondrian. In Paris—even though Miro and Mondrian were

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then living there—these artists seemed to have less status, less authority, as precedents than in New York....

On top of that, for some mysterious reason, proficiency in painting—if you can call it that—prowess in painting, did seem to cross the ocean back in those years; I mean that the general level of ambitious painting became higher over here than in France. I realized that only in the 1950's and was as much surprised as any one, even though I was registering something that had already been true for some dozen years.

*Do you suppose there was a sociological reason?*

Oh, I'm sure of that—sociological and other extra-artistic reasons. New York is a big cosmopolitan city, also a rough one, rough in more senses than one, a place loaded with pressures, and during the latter 1930's and early 1940's the pressure in New York on painting was greater than in most other places, I suppose. I think the truth about art circulated downtown in New York more freely maybe than it did elsewhere.

*What was the truth about art?*

That this was good and that was not good or less good. All this was no good and that little bit was good. And knowing where the good and the very good were.

*What spurred this development?*

Because we Americans felt so much further behind the French, or behind

Paris, that we tried that much harder to catch up—just catch up. Then what Marx called the law of combined development came into operation: the strenuous effort you make to catch up sends you ahead in the end; you don't just catch up, you overtake.

A dozen or so American painters did make an extraordinary effort in the 1940's in order to come abreast of Paris—and then the next thing you knew, they were taking the lead away from Paris. This became evident in the early 1950's. I say this without any chauvinist feeling whatsoever.

In the years since then we've become more and more complacent here in New York. We've become parochial; now we don't notice enough what's going on elsewhere. I feel that there are four or five younger sculptors in England who are better than any we have working over here right now.

I think anyhow that sculpture in Europe, in general, reaches a higher level than it does here, in spite of the fact that we did produce, I believe, the best sculptor of his generation in David Smith, who died just short of 60 in 1965, and in spite of the fact that we still do have such good sculptors as Seymour Lipton and Herbert Ferber—and also in spite of the fact that the first American artist of all who deserved to be termed major, in my opinion, was Gaston Lachaise, a sculptor who came here from France when he was 21 and died prematurely in the 1930's in New York. It remains, all the same, that prowess in sculpture hasn't migrated to these shores—not yet.

*Would you say that New York still is*

*the centre of art activity in the United States, or has the focal point shifted elsewhere?*

Of course it still is, in spite of Los Angeles and San Francisco. San Francisco made its bid as a centre of painting in the 1950's, then faded. Los Angeles really is no competitor, though it makes noises like that lately. If anything, American art is even more New York-centred today than it was 10 years ago.

*What about the regional effort?*

It remains provincial, alas. I don't like it that way, but that's the way it's been with painting and sculpture these last 400 years: Florence, Venice, Rome, Bruges, Ghent, Paris, London—Paris was the unrivalled centre of art in the 150 years before 1950. If you weren't in Paris or in touch with Paris you were condemned to be a more or less provincial or minor artist.

Look back and notice who were the major painters during that time. Even Munch, the Norwegian, was Paris-oriented, and in any case he spent five years there in his young manhood. And Paul Klee, who stayed in Germany most of his life, in Munich, broke through in his art only after he made contact with Cubism in Paris in 1912. There you are.

*You don't think, then, that art could be decentralized in any country?*

I hope it could be. But I'm not talking about the future; I'm simply referring to the record. Painting and sculpture haven't been decentralized since the 15th century.

I don't like the fact of centralization, or of one-city countries culturally, but there it is. Yet the past doesn't bind the future all that much, so let's hope something else will happen—I'd love to see Chicago, or Sydney in Australia, or Calcutta, take the lead in painting away from New York; that would liven things up.... Anyhow you have to stay open about the future of art in general; you can't predict it or anything about it. People who try, make themselves look silly in the end.

*Where does American art stand on the international scene today?*

American painting is well ahead. The credit of it is such that a lot of inferior American art is taken very seriously all over the world. It's a paradoxical situation when someone like Rauschenberg—who's nowhere nearly as good as Eakins, Homer, Ryder, or the early John Sloan, or Milton Avery, not to mention Marin—is viewed as a major figure because of the credit American art in general now enjoys in the world.

Andrew Wyeth is another such case. There are at least a hundred-odd people on earth today who paint as well as Wyeth, and many others who paint better. I happen to like his stuff (though its quality has fallen off in recent years), but it's still not that good.

Wyeth is known all over the world right now because American painting is known all over the world. That's quite a change from 25 years ago when everybody was so sure that Americans couldn't produce art of any consequence—and that included Americans themselves.

I grew up into and lived through that

feeling, and looking back now I feel amusement where I used to feel bitterness. In the latter 1940's and even in the early 1950's—Englishmen coming over here would go to Cuba to find North America's significant painting, or to Mexico or French Canada. And right here in New York were people like Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman, then producing their best work.

*Would you say that the experimentation now under way in the art world is a healthy sign?*

It's not experimentation. Leonardo experimented—if you want to call it that—just as much as Picasso ever did, when Leonardo was doing the "Visit of the Magi," which he didn't finish. An artist, when he's ambitious enough or charged enough, is always trying to insert his own experiment in art. That's not experiment. Picasso objected to that word, and he was absolutely right. There's no such thing in art.

You try something and throw it away if it doesn't succeed—doesn't work as quality. Even an academic artist painting a bunch of flowers—if the picture fails in his terms he paints it out or throws it away. You're always experimenting when you try to make art above a certain level, so the word "experiment" becomes meaningless in this context. The word belongs to the journalism about modern art, and the journalism is always wrong.

*You do not agree, then, that Pop art, for example, is exciting because it reflects the multi-dimensionality of today's world?*

No, I don't find it particularly exciting because it's all too familiar—second-hand—as illustration and at the same time trite in terms of "pure" painting. Not altogether, but rather. It asserts itself as newer and fresher than it is. Pop art's too agreeable, too readily pleasing; it doesn't challenge your taste enough. That's why it became so popular so quickly. And that's why it's wearing out—or already has worn out—even in the eyes of its devotees.

*Minimal art is a little more demanding, don't you agree?*

Yes, it is. At the same time its spirit is a good deal like that of Pop. It's not too demanding on your eye. There is some good in Minimal art—whether better than anything in Pop art, I can't say yet—but it's still minor art, agreeable art, which is why it, too, has caught on so fast. Had it been big, challenging, taste-testing art it wouldn't have. It would have met the same more or less prolonged resistance that major art has almost always met in the last 150 years and more.

*Do you find that artists abroad are influenced by American practitioners of Pop and Minimal art?*

In many, many cases. But let me explain myself more. It isn't that I think that Pop and Minimal are worthless. It's just that neither has yet shown itself as capable of major art. And when I talk about Pollock, Newman, Rothko, Motherwell, or Hofmann—confining myself to Americans—or Sam Francis, Morris Louis, Noland, or Olitski—again confin-

ing myself to Americans—I'm talking about major art.

The difference between major and minor is very important. There was a lot of good minor art being produced elsewhere during all the years in which Paris was supreme, but it remained minor, and the art of the last 175 years that we are shown in museums and that we mostly read about is major art, and hardly anything else. And it came out of Paris or its "hinterland."

When we talk about the Impressionists, or Corot, or Delacroix, or Ingres, or Braque, or Leger, or Matisse, or Picasso, or Rodin, or Maillol, or Brancusi, or Vuillard, we're talking about major art. The moment we move elsewhere in the latter two-thirds of the 19th century or first third of the 20th century we run into minor art.

*Could you clarify the difference between major and minor art?*

No. There are criteria, but they can't be put into words—any more than the difference between good and bad in art can be put into words. Works of art move you to a greater or lesser extent, that's all. So far, words have been futile in the matter....Nobody hands out prescriptions to art or artists. You just wait and see what happens—what the artist does.

*Is it not possible that one person can fail to be moved by something that moves another?*

Ah, that's possible, but here we're getting into a fundamental question of aesthetics that I don't think should clutter

up this interview. It happens again and again: we're talking about art and—bang—we come up against questions that philosophers of aesthetics have broken their teeth on ever since the discipline of aesthetics was born, back in the middle of the 18th century. The answers, or lack of them, are there for anyone who's interested in finding out about them, in Kant's *Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* and Croce's *Aesthetics as the Science of Expression*.

*In other words, art is not subjective.*

One of the wonderful things about art is that everybody has to discover the criteria of quality for himself. They can't be communicated by word or demonstration. Yet they are objective, only—as I've already said—they are not amenable to words. You have to find out for yourself by looking and experiencing. And the people who try hardest and look hardest end up, over the ages, by agreeing with one another in the main. That I call the consensus of taste.

*One can be guided by critics, can't one?*

Critics can direct your attention; then you look for yourself. Critics are manipulators of attention, which is not the same thing as moulders of taste. Once again, you make your own way through art, no matter what you read, no matter what you hear. Or rather, you ought to; if you don't you're missing most of the fun. That includes changing your mind as you go along. If you don't find yourself changing your mind from time to time, then you're not really looking for your-

self—and there's no use looking at art if you don't look for yourself.

*Would you say that the American public's taste has matured over the years?*

I would, which is not the same thing as saying that there's been progress in art itself as distinct from taste. There certainly hasn't. Art hasn't gotten better or more "mature" over the past 5,000, 10,000, or 20,000 years. On the other hand I do think that there has been a broadening of taste in our time, in the West, and it's owed in a certain large part to the effect of modernist art.

Now we appreciate all sorts of exotic art that we didn't 100 years ago, whether ancient Egyptian, Persian, Far Eastern, barbaric, or primitive. Of course, Europeans became attracted to Chinese and other kinds of exotic art as far back as the 18th century, or even before, but they treated it as a curiosity, as decoration, rather than as art in its own right. That has changed since the Impressionists and their contemporaries fell in love with Japanese prints. Since then we in the West have acquired a catholicity of taste in art that is probably historically unique, without precedent; and this is a real gain.

The Romans appreciated certain kinds of exotic art, and other peoples—the Indians, the Chinese and the Japanese—were quick to take to Greco-Roman art or to realistic Western painting, but we've opened ourselves to exotic traditions in a complete way and also without condescension. And taste in art should be catholic; there's no question about that.

The rate at which the public assimilates advanced art does seem to be speeding up, but I don't know yet what to conclude from that.

*You have implied that the spectator's involvement in a representational work tends to hamper his understanding.*

Because there's every temptation for the unpracticed eye to get involved in the illustrated subject, that's all. It's harder, I think, for a beginner to develop his taste with representational than with abstract art, all other things being equal. Abstract art is a wonderful way in which to learn to see art in general. You appreciate the Old Masters all the more once you can tell a good Mondrian or a good Pollock from a bad one.

*You were instrumental in bringing Pollock, whom you consider to be the best painter the United States ever produced, to the public eye. What caused you to believe in him when others did not?*

His quality. His pictures "sent" me.

*Even though some maintained that a child could do as well?*

I don't have to assert that children can't do as well; we've already seen that they can't. You can spot a child's abstract painting readily. I remember Helen Frankenthaler's once showing Pollock a painting done by her three-year-old nephew without telling him who'd made it—it was a damned good child's painting too—and Jackson took one glance at it and said, "There's nothing in it." He took

it for an adult's work, yes, but he also saw through it. There was the same sort of difference as that between a five-year-old prodigy's drawing and one by Raphael.

*Some experts claim that painting is finished, that we are entering an era in which sculpture is dominant.*

They're not experts; they're merely people who sound off about art. Painting is not finished if only because the best art being produced in this country right now is still painting. A Minimal sculptor like Donald Judd is very small stuff compared with a painter like Jules Olitski. Judd is good, but small, quite small. And the other Minimal artists—well, some of them have done good things now and then, but it's still small stuff. And now they seem already to be left with nothing more to say—that includes Judd too.

You know, the representative art figure of the 1960's is not the artist, critic, or collector, but the curator of modern art. He "swings," and he "swings" the most. The last sin of which he would want to be found guilty is that of not keeping up, of not being "with it."

*What do you think of the invasion of art by technology—or do you consider it that?*

No, I don't consider it an "invasion." I haven't yet seen much good art produced with the help of what's called technology, but that doesn't mean it can't or won't be. So far, however, all the kinetic effects and all the light effects and the whatever other effects haven't been

able to cover up the fact that the artists involved were not inspired and had nothing much to say. There's nothing wrong with technology as such in art; anything you use as a means is okay if it produces results, results that have artistic value.

But the present noise about technology appears to be more a matter of fashion and desperation than anything else. I say desperation because artists in despair will clutch at fashions. (And most artists are in despair, whether they know it or not.) What did Goethe say? One of his epigrams was to the effect that when a lot of people got on to something in a short time, or at the same time, you could be sure it wasn't much good.

*Why have so many artists turned to technology at this particular time?*

Because fashions now follow one another in art faster than they used to—not styles, but fashions—and the fashion now is "medium-exploding"—that's part of the painting-is-finished cry. Technology is explosive in this sense all right, and it also has its own connotations of modernity, of "far-outness." But to repeat: so far the results are paltry, and in art you always look at the results; you never talk about art that's not yet been made.

*What, in your opinion, should be the role of the artist in society?*

To make good art, that's all. If the artist is charged with social awareness, all right. If it works, fine. It doesn't seem to have worked much in the last 100 years or so. At the same time all the aims that the artist pursues are artistic, in a sense...

Good art, great art has been produced under controls, but there are controls and controls. I've seen some contemporary Soviet art, and as far as I can tell, art in the Soviet Union is controlled by Philistines. The same appears to be true in China and in every other place where Bolsheviks are in power—I call them Bolsheviks instead of Communists because I feel that that's more accurate, more specific. "Socialism" in backward countries means Bolshevism—Stalinism, if you want—and that means something barbaric, because "socialism" in a backward environment becomes, among other things, an aggressive expression of backwardness.

At least that's the way it's been up to now. Yugoslavia may be an exception; I can't tell. And I can't tell about Cuba either. I do know, all the same, that there's a great deal of cultural repression in Bolshevized countries.

About "protest" today—I think it means something serious insofar as people are protesting, whether they know it or not, against the quality of life under industrialism. But there's often a lot of hysteria involved in latter-day protest. You know, the clinical definition has it that when you're hysterical you carry on about something other than what's really bothering you—because you feel you can't do anything about what's really bothering you, or what in any case are the real problems.

There are two real problems in this country: the first is to give Negroes their rightful place as human beings, the second to overcome the dirt and ugliness and the inequities in general of the environment. But it's been far easier to carry

on about the war in Vietnam—that's far enough away from home.

*Have you any thoughts on the burgeoning of art museums throughout the United States?*

I think that the boringness of life in this country no longer is being accepted by the generations that have grown up since the Depression. The Depression was a great watershed. More and more people are enjoying material comfort, and they or their offspring have begun to ask for more than that, more than material well-being. There's no question but that the businessman's outlook that used to run this country no longer prevails in the same way—thank God it doesn't—and more people look to art and the "finer things" in general as an alternative.

Let me say that the Johnson Administration did more for culture and art than all previous administrations put together. What's paradoxical is how little capital the former President or his supporters made of this. Every other year, \$5,000 has been handed out to each of 60 painters and sculptors—and well chosen ones at that. It happened two years ago; it just happened again. That the Federal Government should do something like that was previously unheard of in this country.

*How would you characterize the pictorial and sculptural sensibility of the 1960's?*

As sort of hard-edged, flat-coloured, high-coloured, linear, in contrast with the smudgy, deep-coloured, turbid painterliness of the 1940's and '50's. That covers

everything new in this decade: what they call colour-painting, Minimal, technological, even "earth" art (though this latter also begins to react against the 60's). Drawing is geometrical or quasi-geometrical, everything is at right angles, or in right circles—linear in a clear-cut way. That speaks for the sensibility of the 60's, which I'd say is the sensibility of a period of *detente*.

This may seem paradoxical. Here in the latter 60's, all filled with protest and apparent turmoil, the art looks like that of a time of relaxation. There you are. Abstract Expressionism, in the 1940's and '50's, had the air of a time of unrest. Well, the 1950's were not really a time of unrest, were they?

As one who grew up in the 1930's, I know what a time of unrest feels like, a time of crisis (granting that the word "crisis" is much abused through over-use). Well, the art that actually reflected the temper of the 1930's came along only in the latter 1940's and in the 1950's. There you are again. Art is not always in advance of the general mood. There's a cliche about the artist as prophet, as foreseeing what's to come. Maybe he does, sometimes, but he can also follow

and lag—and I'm speaking about the great artist, not just the mediocre one.

Nobody should make predictions about the course of art. The record shows that you can't, and when you try you are inevitably shown up. Thank God you can't see into the future of art—art would be less fun if you could....

There are, of course, more important things than art: life itself, what actually happens to you. This may sound silly, but I have to say it, given what I've heard art-silly people say all my life: I say that if you have to choose between life and happiness or art, remember always to choose life and happiness. Art solves nothing, either for the artist himself or for those who receive his art.

Art shouldn't be over-rated. It started to be in the latter 18th century, and definitely was in the 19th. The Germans started the business of assessing the worth of a society by the quality of art it produced. But the quality of art in a society does not necessarily—or maybe seldom—reflect the degree of well-being enjoyed by most of its members. And well-being comes first. The weal and woe of human beings come first. I deplore the tendency to over-value art.

# ROBERT FROST'S CONSTELLATED SKY

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REGINALD L. COOK

*In most Indian universities which offer a paper in American literature, Robert Frost will be studied this year. Too recent a poet for final assessment, literary scholars in many lands have involved themselves in studying the poems of this man who won fame at home while yet alive and, abroad, led learned critics and simple readers to a new interest in American poetry.*

*The following thoughtful, intricate critique first appeared in "Western Humanities Review." Dr. Cook is Dana Professor of American Literature at Middlebury College, Vermont, and author of "The Dimensions of Robert Frost."*

## I Vision

THE WAY to Frost's vision, like the pathway to truth for Stephen Crane's wayfarer, is a hazard of singular knives, but it has to be made through what Philip Rahv calls "dialectical relation" of text and context.

Critics are quick to take positions. The sentimentalist and moralizer makes an uplifter of Frost, the poet of "Birches" and "A Tuft of Flowers." The Freudian finds "The Subverted Flower" and "The Lovely Shall be Choosers" protective screens for "a dark side." When Lawrence Thompson's man of many masks

is not emphasized the interpreter is considered simplistic. If the darker side, recognized by Lionel Trilling, is not emphasized the interpreter is accused of failing to recognize depth. Or if Frost's sanguinity is stressed the interpreters are forthwith ridiculed "as a whole dunciad of babbling innocence."

While sentimentalism will surely tab Frost as a St. Valentine's card poet, a cold-eyed scientific impersonality will only leave the poems as exercises in ingenious evasion. Once, late in life, Frost said in a public lecture: "There's a dispute as to how dark I am. Some think I'm too dark; others think I'm not dark enough." What is needed is the finer distinction to detect what is comic from tragic in tragicomic.

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Obviously how he was to be taken was both soberly and amusingly on Frost's mind early and late. In a 1935 reading he took special pains to direct attention toward how he thought he should be taken. In subject, theme and treatment, exactly where should the emphasis be placed? Did he want to be taken as a regionalist, as a metaphysical lyrst, as a dramatic poet? Frost was strenuous in denying the emphasis on regional attachments. He proclaimed himself early "a realist," "a pursi-ist." So he was each in its own way.

#### *A Regionalist*

But C.P. Snow (*Variety of Men*) recognized "the locative" as central to his art. Rooted in the particularities of place and expressed in a common language, he has long been associated with the pastoral. Except as his subject matter of butterfly weeds and ovenbirds, grindstones and Morgan horses reflect local colour, I think it is a serious critical lapse to stress the prominence of the pastoral tradition in a poet whose "ulteriorities" have so much more to do with a sophisticated world of human knowledge than with a bucolic tradition associated with the early Spenserian world of shepherds and shepherdesses.

Even less does he derive from the Wordsworthian rustic tradition. Nor like the Cumberland poet, was he a poet of scenery. Only in the way Robinson's Tilbury Town or Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha have imaginary geographic location is Frost's North of Boston pastorally located. How much less he has to offer in the sense of place than a local

colour poet like Whittier or a short story writer like Sarah Orne Jewett. Less interested in celebrating seasonal rites than in a "strategic retreat" from which to launch his campaign, his special wisdom is not, as in Wordsworth, found in nature but in humanity—in the knowledge of people's attitudes and behaviour.

True he reads nature with an observing eye and feels its forms and attractions along his senses, but it is a reading of the human heart which both concerns him and in which he is most acute. Isn't this what we feel in such a description as the following?

Up where the trees grow short,  
    the mosses tall,  
I made him gather me wet snow  
    berries  
On slippery rocks beside a  
    waterfall.  
I made him do it for me in the  
    dark.

The meaning in Frost's poetry derives less from juxtaposing a modern, complex world with a simple, primitive one than it does from the pursuit of a particular fact until it suggests a general truth.

#### *A Metaphysical Lyrst?*

As a poet with a speculative interest in ideas, Frost is referred to as a metaphysical lyrst. I can only think it must mean that the mode of his imagination does not represent a recording of realities; such, for example, as Stendhal meant when he called a novel "a mirror carried along the highway." Instead, the mode of his imagination represents a way of seeing and feeling the reality of the

world as well as discovering what is common in experience but obscured perhaps by what Coleridge called "the film of familiarity" until Frost's insight and idiom put it in common possession.

To borrow a provocative phrase from Wallace Stevens, Frost engages his world as "the spirit's alchemiciana." This is surely what he means when he says of the poet's subject matter: "It should have happened to everyone but it should have occurred to no one before as material." As in "For Once, then, Something" and "The Geode" the eye of his heart and mind are speculatively inclined and responsive to the detection of the unexpected and unanticipated. If this is true of Frost, is it not likely to be true of his poems? He thought so. "My poems...are all set to trip the reader head foremost into the boundless."

Yet in inhabiting a self-admitted naturalistic universe, as in "Storm Fear" and "Stars," he doesn't thereby accept the naturalistic view of man as wholly at the mercy of a mechanistic process as "The Demiurge's Laugh," "Willful Homing," and "Sand Dunes" testify. Man, an image-making creature, creates the metaphor by which he identifies his relationship to things.

In "The White-Tailed Hornet," an example of Frost's empirical wisdom, he reverses the admonitory adage: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." He makes out a sound case for the unwisdom of ascribing infallibility to non-human creatures. Not self-deceived, this guarded meliorist refuses to minimize the difference between human and non-human animal behaviour.

Speculatively, he exercises the dialectic of contained contradictions. In "Bond and Free," he contemplates the suspended opposites of love and thought; "In a Poem," of rhythm and metre; in "On the Heart's Beginning to Cloud the Mind," of heart and mind; in "Fire and Ice," of desire (lust) and hate; in "The Master Speed", of motion and rest; in "The Lesson for Today", of the tragic and comic; in "The Egg and the Machine," of the organic and the mechanical; in "The Middleness of the Road", of absolute flight and absolute rest; and in the preface to *King Jasper*, of seriousness and humour. It was characteristic that he held opposing aspects of belief and opinion in a dialectical tension.

Precisely in this containment—not reconciliation—of opposites Frost is most idiosyncratic and possibly most American. In "The Bear," "The Thinker," and "Leaves Compared with Flowers," he refines Emerson's polarity theory in a seriocomic dialectic. Armoured with an ingenious and agile wit, he evokes a teasing image of the Secret that sits in the middle and knows. What the Secret knows is containment of passion and reason, alienation and sympathy, the irrationalities of life and Whitman's "primal sanities" of nature.

Frost contains, he does not reconcile, Emerson's "shining angularities". Containment is the essence of his metaphysical lyric. He can barely resist the hypnotic spell of the dark woods, the beckoning tree branch, "the vague dream-heads", the thrush in the forest, and keep his eyes on the stars he looks for. How self-revealing he is when he tells a friend

(Louis Mertins), "Maybe I'm one who never makes up his mind." Either on principle or from temperamental restlessness and intellectual curiosity, he was always taking and shifting positions. Yet, fundamentally, his poetry does assume a posture—the sense sounds make. As a metaphysical lyrst he speculates on the realities of the world; he doesn't try to reform the world.

#### *A Dramatic Poet?*

Is Frost to be taken as a dramatic poet rather than as a philosopher? "Everything written," he reminded us back in the '20's, "is as good as it is dramatic." When his belief in the dramatic impulse, whether in story, dramatic dialogue, or in the give-and-take in lyrics, is traced to its source in "voice tones" or the "sound of sense," we have come reasonably close to aim and accomplishment in his poetry.

"It's tone I'm in love with; that's what poetry is, tone," he told a group of poets at the National Poetry Festival in 1962. In the beginning of his career he wrote John Bartlett that bringing to book "the sound of sense" was his avowed aim. ("I alone of English writers have consciously set myself to make music out of what I may call the sound of sense.")

How could we contend with any authority that Frost has given us a new conception of audible truth in the practice of verse tones? Or that he so intended? But at least he did have a fresher approach than Wordsworth's. Not dialect, not colloquialisms per se, not the rhetorical—are the essential earmarks of

his idiom.

What is heard in his poetry is not a voice speaking for what was felt yet never before uttered. It is a voice distinctly personal, communicating in a steady, uninterrupted way what lay speechless and unacknowledged until he extricated it from the conventions of a poet's language. By such an imaginative capability he dramatized through voice tones what is common in experience—abandoned woodpiles or after-images of apple-picking, the passing of a season or exuberance of spring wind.

Whenever the voice is heard in his poetry, what is important is not the regional speech habits, although they are subtly here. "The night is setting in to blow." Or, "the West is getting out of gold." Nor is it the vividly identified object, like the extended limb of a tree "forever trying the widow catch," or firelight dancing "in yellow wriggles on the ceiling." What is important is the radial inter-play of centre and circumference. What is integral with the man only afterward became the voice of a region. "Frost," says William O'Donnell, "did not discover a subject matter and then call in the aid of a tangy regional speech." This appears the truth of the matter.

What Frost tries for in his dramatic "voice tones" is a language, which, as Ernst Cassirer would say, expresses "the very nature and essence of things"—a *lingua Adamica*, as it were. Even his commonplaces are earmarked by the voice as any of those who listened to him over the years know. No disconnection existed between the language in which he thought and the language of expression. Words do become deeds as

he believed they should when there is a direct connection between word and reality.

The vitality of language is sustained when words are neither refined out of existence nor coarsened by blurring. His language is in the poem as the details are in an English landscape; which, as Henry James reported, "has a history, has played a part, has a value to the imagination." Frost's words are kin and siblings. Whose voice do we think we hear in the following? And isn't the drama in the stresses given the voice tones?

I sha'nt be gone long,—you come too.

...

I have been one acquainted with the night.

...

There would be more than ocean-water broken

Before God's last *Put Out the Light*  
was spoken.

...

However it is in some other world  
I know that this is the way in ours.

...

Heaven gives its glimpses only to those

Not in position to look too close.

...

I told him this is a pleasant life  
To set your heart to the bark of trees.

So much a part of him was tone and so in love with play—by which he meant not art as games but art as exercise of verbal agility—he did his jig on a rhyme. "Forgive, O Lord, my little joke on Thee/ And I'll forgive Thy great big one on me." He plays with solemnity and the

absurd, and, to borrow another James' phrase, "they never submerged him."

All the aesthetic drama is in the play of Frost's speech cadences over the rigidity of metre; all the intellectual pleasure is in the play of mind over the profound. Listen to the sound in the following long sentence, insinuating its thought in a run of words, light and lively, in "The Black Cottage."

We chanced in passing by that afternoon

To catch it in a sort of special picture  
Among tar-banded ancient cherry trees,

Set well back from the road in rank lodged grass,

The little cottage we were speaking of,  
A front with just a door between two windows,

Fresh painted by the shower a velvet black.

## II Motivation

As a poet of place, ideas, and tones of voice, is there an unconscious as well as conscious motivation in Frost's poetry? If his avowed motivation is to bring "the sound of sense" to book, from what angle of vision does he make his approach?

He has been variously identified as a classical poet, a symbolist, a poet in the pastoral tradition, an Emersonian romantic, a localist, a revisionist, a spiritual drifter, a diversionist, and an ordinary man. A willing player of this game, he is self-described as an environmentalist, a realist, a synecdochist. Whatever he may be, essentially what is intriguing to the reader is a

motivation more felt than stated.

"Creation," he once said, "has its end implicit in the beginning but not foreknown." In approaching a poem "as an adventure," he always denied he knew the end. "What," he asked, "do you go into a poem for? To see if you can get out."

### *Poetry as Adventure*

He often used the image of dawning as explanatory of the genesis of a poem. The experience was like a disclosure, like the dawning of a thought, a new day. He was stubborn about this contention and consequently implacably opposed to Poe's *ex post facto* explanation of the genesis of "The Raven" in the famous explanation in "The Philosophy of Composition."

In "The Constant Symbol" he clarified his angle of vision. "The freshness of a poem," he said, "belongs absolutely to its not having been thought out and then set to verse as the verse in turn might be set to music. A poem is the emotion of having a thought while the reader waits a little anxiously for the success of dawn." Calculation, then, is hardly one of the benchmarks in his poetic profession. Some unconscious motivation is contributory to the poem. The poet is taking a chance and the risk is a challenge to his craftsmanship.

### *Seeing the Importance in what is Familiar*

Another aspect in the angle of vision is the poet's interests. In *Ideology and Utopia*, Karl Mannheim shows how the observer's interest influences the formu-

lation of concepts. His choice of example is the attitude toward freedom in the early years of nineteenth century Germany. The old-style conservative thought of freedom as a *qualitative* concept—the right to maintain one's own individual distinctiveness. The liberal of the same period thought it an *equalitarian* concept, overthrowing the external, legal, and non-equalitarian social and traditional order of things.

"In brief," Mannheim says, "even in the formulation of concepts, the angle of vision is guided by the observer's interest." Is this parallel applicable Frost in such broad interests as religion, politics, education, science, and aesthetics? Isn't this what Frost is really getting at, when, in his letters, he explains the relationship to the source of his materials previously stressed?

He doesn't stress original expression unduly; he stresses originality in *seeing* the importance in what is familiar to all. He said, it will be recalled: "It should have happened to everyone but it should have occurred to no one before as material." In poems as dissimilar as "The Vantage Point" or "West-Running Brook" or "Neither Out Far Nor In Deep," the formulated concept is surely guided by the poet's interests.

Yet exactly how are we to identify Frost's *angle* of vision? Is he the synecdochist he claimed to be, the revisionist Untermeyer called him, the localist C.P. Snow assumed him to be? Obviously, like Emerson, he does not have a given centre, but as a strategist of adjustable positions operates from a shifting centre.

Hence the criticism of Frost as evasive or guarded or reticent; a critical posture

that does not (at least as I see it) grasp accurately the angle of Frost's vision—the position of a poet whose imagination is nourished on what is minimal (e.g., "The Exposed Nest," "The Ovenbird," "The Need of Being Versed in Country Things" and the muted "Out, Out—" "Hill Wife").

Writing in what C.S. Lewis would, according to W.H. Auden, call "Good Drab," Frost avoids magnifications in either language or subject. Like Flaubert, he is "one who likes to treat an humble fact as respectfully as a big one." The vision of any man is by definition reductive. Although it is not possible for him to see everything it is true in the areas of his interest and competence he can see more than others. So Frost would have understood Kafka's cryptic injunction, "In the fight between you and the world back the world!" He would have recognized the margin of distorting illusion in the human angle of vision.

So too would he have supported Mies van der Rohe (in paraphrase), his less really becomes more. He recognizes the difference between saying too little (what to make of a diminished thing) or too much (those who attempt to drag you beyond what you want to say).

#### *'I Learned to Line the Figures in'*

A third aspect related to the motivation of the poems and the angle of vision is Frost's sense of the separateness of the parts being equal in importance to the connection of the parts. If he had not thought this to be true, it is unlikely he would have written as he did in "Into My Own": "They would not find me

changed from him they knew/Only more sure of all I thought was true."

Each poem aims to have an integrity of its own—an integrity which consists in tonal quality as well as in subject matter. To keep the poem's integrity he chose *not* to write every day, or, at least, publish what he had written every day. The poems must not all sound alike, just as they must not all think alike. *Complete Poems* can be regarded as a group of individual poems, and, so far as the poet is concerned the separability of the poems is as important as the potential connection.

Yet if we stop here we stop short of a rather remarkable experience in reading Frost. In "The Peaceful Shepherd," he says: "And on the pasture bars,/I learned to line the figures in/Between the dotted stars." It is lining "the figures in," which, after all, is what *Complete Poems* comes to—the relationship of the separate parts to the whole.

Ortega would call the separate parts proximate, or near, vision, where the eye converges on a central subject, thereby limiting its horizon or field of vision. It becomes atomic, dissociating, analyzing, distinguishing. In distant, or far, vision, the point of view becomes the synopsis—"the perfect unity of the whole visual field." In "The Middleness of the Road" Frost joins absolute rest (proximate vision)—the local green—with absolute flight (distant vision)—the universal blue.

That *Complete Poems* may be a sum of Frost's moods is no great assurance of its continuing influence. However, if it is, finally, a resolution of perceptive moments, it may be a qualitative measurement of the poet's Jobian crav-

ing for design. "The artist in me cries out for design," says Job in *A Masque of Reason*. I have noticed when a poet finds the outside world either impoverished or refractory, he is forced on his resourceful imagination.

The danger in his improvisations is tentativeness, miscellany, fragmentary thrusts, as in Wallace Stevens' *Harmo-nium*, whose vulnerability Frost exposed by the charge that while he stuck to "subjects" Stevens wrote "*bric-a-brac*." Stevens has indeed imposed his perceiving imagination upon the world and created a "mythology of self." Frost, sticking to the realities of the world—"subjects"—sometimes barely escapes reproducing them rather than transforming them in his *materia poetica*.

A Frost poem is a way of seeing and feeling (after Catullus he calls it "thought-felt") the reality of the world. "A subject," he writes in his *Letters*, "must be an object." So, too, are Stevens' poems like "Sunday Morning" or "The Idea of Order at Key West," ways of seeing and feeling. Yet there is this difference.

Frost is projecting a subject like a lantern slide onto the screen of the responsive reader's imagination. The subject Frost sees as there—the fact—is not there at all in Stevens' way of seeing. What is there is what Stevens pleases to put there. For Frost, as for Thoreau, the important thing is the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen.

For Stevens, unlike Thoreau, the important thing is not the thing seen but the way of seeing it. As he says, "It is the belief and not the god that counts." Or "The centre that he sought was a state

of mind." The state of mind and the belief are determinants; the ostensible objects and the gods are referents. Attracting engages Stevens; discovery, Frost.

### III From Flashes of Light to Constellations

In *Fire and Ice*, Lawrence Thompson quotes Frost: "Young people have insight," says Frost. "They have a flash here and a flash there. It is like the stars coming out in the early evening. They have flashes of light. It is later in the dark of life that you see forms, constellations. And it is the constellations that are philosophy. The flashing is done; the coming out of the stars."

Years later he still used the metaphor not as an all-purpose or heavy-duty reliability but as the truth of what had taken place in his poetry. Frost's figure in the carpet is of the constellated sky. If we ask, first of all, does the Frostian view of unconscious motivation in the individual poems also extend to *Complete Poems*, we would still have to answer in the affirmative. His vivid use of the star image—the appearance of stars in the evening analogizing the struggle for recognition in writing his poems—is resolved finally in the metaphor of the constellations in the dark of the night, the appearance of star or poem clusters equivalent to Cassiopeia's Chair, or Cygnus, or Ursa Major.

*'Coming nearer to the fact'*

Surely Frost's metaphor suggests unconscious intent and fortuitous combina-

tion of variant themes in constellated clusters. He did not, to borrow a parallel from another genre, like Zola, sit down at an early age to write the history of the Rougon-Macquart families with great exactitude of detail.

On the contrary, from the beginning there was an unconscious, even if vague, ambiguous, and tentative thrust toward something—the ultimate of which the poet was not completely aware. It is even possible to identify the unconscious, subtle, and reticent motivation with what the poet later called “a passionate preference” for those atomistic facts in man experience which are the solid substance of his poetic vigil.

What we as readers, and Frost as creator, feel, is, in Emerson's words, “the ravishment of the intellect by coming nearer to the fact.” It is the painful and shattering experiences which Frost contained that charges the poems among whose constellated designs are trees, flowers, webs, walls, and stars with such terrific meaning for us.

In spite of its intrinsic beauty the metaphor of the constellated sky must not be pressed too hard. “I know,” the poet admitted in “Education by Poetry,” “the metaphor will break down at some point, but it has not failed everywhere.” Although he was referring to the metaphor of evolution his comment is generally applicable.

The Whole—that is, the *Gestalt*, or design—is not really prior to the parts. We cannot legitimately invoke Hegel if we wanted to. In the preface to *Philosophy of Right*, he contends the idea comes before the deed. “Philosophy,” he says, “as the thought of the world does not

appear until reality has completed its formative process and made itself ready. History, then, corroborates the teachings of the conception that only in the maturity of reality does the ideal appear as the counterpart to the real, apprehends the real world in its substance, and shapes it into an intellectual kingdom.... The Owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering.”

Frost fulfills no such foreplanned Hegelian design; he is *creating* a design. He doesn't wait until reality has completed its formative process; he initiates reality, he follows organic processes. His method does not resemble the impression the facade of Wells Cathedral with its three hundred statues in their niches makes upon the viewer—“an immense system of images governed by a quaint theological order,” as Henry James says, “and most impressive in its completeness.” The poems which compose *Complete Poems*—and which Frost thought of as representing “a thrust of power”—are more aptly described by James M. Cox as a design with “no plan laid out in advance but an order which emerges as the poet moves and which he in turn discovers as he reviews his progress.”

#### *'Every Poem Solves Something for Me'*

Frost wrote poems, as he says, to resolve problems. “You know I've always said: every poem solves something for me.” There are, in consequence, groups or clusters of poems which do resolve thematic problems. They constellate. What, for example, Mirfak and Algol are to the constellations Perseus, or

Capella and Menkalinan are to Auriga, the following groups are to their special themes. "Triple Bronze" and "The Drumlin Woodchuck" constellate; so, too, do "The Lost Follower" and "Not Quite Social"; "The Oven Bird" and "Nothing Gold Can Stay"; "The Road Not Taken" and "Stopping By Woods"; "Dust of Snow," "The Egg and the Machine," and "A Leaf Treader."

The many-starred constellations in the theme of death include "Away!" and "Misgiving" and "In a Disused Graveyard" as well as "The Death of a Hired Man." The theme of waste constellates in "Pod of the Milkweed," "November," "Carpe Diem" and "In Hardwood Groves." Privacy clusters "Two Tramps in Mud-Time," "The Egg and the Machine," "Not to Keep," and "Two Look at Two."

The limits of human knowledge constellate in "Neither Out Far Nor In Deep," "The Star-Splitter," and "A Cabin in the Clearing." Fear constellates in "Bereft," "The Fear," and "Once by the Pacific." Skepticism constellates in "Design," "The White-tailed Hornet," "The Most of It," and "Neither Out Far Nor In Deep."

Isn't there something to be said, not

simply for the conjunction of stars in constellations or in groups of poems but as well for the extensible meaning which results from what poems of similar theme produce by configured irradiations? Then we read each in terms of all in other ways than Emerson suggested. Separable thematic poems without altering their figurative natures are at last perceived through each other configuratively.

This is a climactic point in reading Frost—the simultaneity of the vision of separability and inseparability, of part and whole, of specific and general, of fact and implication, of distant and near, of star and constellation.

This is the Grand Design. Becomingly, it is in a sense of mystery of stellar space where the poet projects a human identity. "Some mystery becomes the proud."

In the psychological struggle with experience Frost gradually discerns a clarification of order. In the clearing he finds an association of one poem with another in variations on a theme. It is indeed like the stars coming out; only in the dark of life are the forms patent. The constellated sky—*Complete Poems*—at last will hold them all.

## TWO REVOLUTIONS

DATUS C. SMITH, JR.

*Mr. Smith predicts that "whether for good or ill, overwhelming changes are going to come" as revolutions in education and communications throughout the developing countries affect their economies and social fabrics.*

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TWO SIMULTANEOUS revolutions in the developing countries—in education and in communications—can be expected separately, and through their interaction, to have an impact which is as yet only vaguely foreseen. They promise changes not merely in degree but in kind. As education pushes toward universality, and as the communications network makes more and more sweeping use of printing, broadcasting, film-making and other new methods, the effects will be not only on the economy but perhaps on the basic civic structure of the societies concerned.

Whether the long-run political results will be beneficial is another and quite

different question. And whether the side effects will strengthen the social fabric is likewise in doubt. But, whether for good or ill, overwhelming changes are going to occur. We should think about them if we are concerned with the welfare of Asia and Africa and Latin America, or with the relations of their societies with the rest of the world.

In education, the developing countries should be able to achieve important shortcuts, proceeding directly to new methods of instruction. Ironically, the underdeveloped state of both their education and their communications is a positive boon in that new methods will be far easier to introduce than if there were more substantial vested interests com-

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mitted to old-fashioned ways of doing things, hence inclined to regard progress along any new lines as a threat.

The developing nations should be able to use audiovisual techniques instead of depending exclusively on individual teachers and the printing press. Contact of the best teachers with the mass of the country's pupils should be possible through multiplication by electronics. At least some of the principles of programmed learning can enter the new textbooks.

Wide currency can be given to supplementary reading that is interesting to the student instead of imprisoning the mind in the narrowness of one textbook. The oral approach and other new methods of language teaching can replace the formal-grammar systems that have proved so arduous and so ineffective.

### *Difficulties and Detours*

Yet the circumstances in which these developments will take place are so unprecedented and suggest so many reciprocal relations with economics, politics and sociology that the path toward the ultimate goals will be cluttered with obstructions and diverted through many detours. Some examples may suggest how bizarre the circumstances can be.

Think, for instance, of what would be involved in introducing audiovisual methods of instruction into Asian and African schools. Planners can calculate the economic requirements for broadcasting systems and receivers. They can even project the need for training operators of the equipment and for supplying electricity many leagues from any present

source.

But there is an additional need that is so homespun and down-to-earth that nobody ever thinks of it. For the new systems to work there must be conditions of light and acoustics which probably do not now exist in one in a thousand Afro-Asian school buildings. What chance will new methods have in a building with perhaps half a dozen different grades in one room, no partitions, no sidewalls if the school is in the tropics, and with a corrugated metal roof that produces a deafening roar throughout much of the rainy season?

It is of course technically easier to remodel or rebuild school buildings than to create a national broadcasting system, but this is a good illustration of the unexpected troubles, arising from the humblest sources, that can block a system in which all the much more sophisticated elements seem to have been accounted for.

For another example of frustrations from extraneous sources, consider the illogicalities in the rules about customs duties. Countries trying to achieve self-sufficiency in one branch or another of the communications industry constantly let their own rules prevent attainment of the objective.

Foreign books come in duty-free, but the paper which local publishers need to manufacture their own books is subject to duty. Exposed film or prints may enter without duty, while raw film that the local film industry needs for its production draws a heavy tax. Some years ago an infant industry for casting Bengali printing types in East Pakistan collapsed because of high duty

on the special metals required, while competition in the form of metal already cast into Bengali type came in free.

Such illogicalities are not peculiar to the developing countries. We can cite embarrassing analogues here in the United States. But the Asians and Africans and Latin Americans in general have so small a margin for error that they cannot bear the burden of such absurdities.

The educational revolution is proceeding apace, but that is not to say that education is getting better and better everywhere in Asia and Africa. Indeed there has been retrogression in some places. The reasons for this have been varied, some quite irrelevant to education itself, such as wars and economic difficulties.

But some of the other reasons relate to the educational revolution itself. There has been too-easy acceptance of foreign schemes not really suitable for the local educational system. New curricula have been handed to teachers whose minds are rooted in the old. Teaching methods absolutely dependent on new teaching materials have been introduced before the materials are available. And, because of the need for a great increase in the number of teachers, too many countries have had a teaching force up to one-fourth of whose members may themselves have had an education no higher than sixth grade.

#### *Current Directions*

Many Asian and African educators realize that more deliberate speed in the reforms would have been advisable. But for better or worse the great movement is under way, and its main outlines seem

clear:

(1) The reality of *the movement toward universal elementary education* is beyond question. Even if quality has gone down because too much was attempted all at once, education *has* pushed out beyond the cities to the remotest provinces. To some extent even the nomadic tribes are included, with schools that move back and forth with the seasons.

A closely reasoned and statistically responsible projection for the future can be found in a document called "Draft Model for Educational Development in Asia." It was prepared by UNESCO specialists in 1965 in response to a request from the Ministers of Education of the Asian member states.

According to that study, seven years of elementary education will be universal—in practice, not merely on the statute books—by 1980 for all of the eighteen Asian countries studied except Afghanistan, Laos and Nepal, and even those three are expected to achieve universality sometime after 1980. At the time of the study the percentage of elementary-age children actually in school varied from 10 per cent in Afghanistan through 57 per cent in India to 98 per cent in Taiwan.

(2) The *distinction between continuing and terminal education* will be more frankly recognized. The pretence will be abandoned that every Asian or African child presenting himself at school is an eventual candidate for an Oxford Doctor of Philosophy. The number of students who do in fact continue into higher education will of course increase greatly, but there will be more realism about the others.

An effort will be made to serve the

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real educational needs of the far greater number who will not go beyond seventh grade. Although it would be a sad mistake to shape Afro-Asian education too exclusively in response to the need for technical skills, it is a fact that vocational education is woefully underdeveloped. More intelligent attention can be given to that important subject in the new curricula. There is a real determination to respond to actual local needs and interests rather than to copy something from a British or American school.

(3) *New methods of instruction* are being tried out in many countries of Africa and Asia. Some of these will prevail, and elsewhere still newer systems will be tried. And new methods require new educational materials and new training of teachers. There are already quite a number of efforts, widely scattered, to adapt some of the recent inventions such as the new mathematics and sciences, new methods of language teaching, some elements of programmed learning and novel forms of student participation.

(4) Meanwhile, the *changes in secondary and higher education* should also be dramatic, though the trends in each may well be in opposing directions. In high school the changes will be toward satisfaction of local needs. In the universities, on the other hand, there will be an effort toward closer matching of the qualities and standards of higher education and advanced research in developed nations.

The UNESCO study indicates that school enrolment in the secondary years in the eighteen countries studied will grow from 12 million to 46 million by 1980, while the growth in what we would call junior colleges will be from 2 million to

6 million.

(5) *Education will be increasingly directed toward specific manpower needs.* That has both good and bad implications. It is good because the manpower needs are genuine and must positively be filled if a nation is to progress. Also, the practicality of the manpower argument appeals to sister ministries of finance, industry, commerce and economic development from which education seeks support. But there is reason for concern about too much emphasis on technical skills.

A projection of manpower needs as a basis for educational planning was introduced by Frederick Harbison in the famous Ashby Report on Nigerian education a decade ago. It proved to be one of the most useful concepts for guiding educational development, and it continues to be of value. As long as the term "manpower needs" is given enough breadth, the approach is clearly beneficial.

But the danger is the tendency of a narrow manpower specialist to forget that man does not live by bread alone. The need is to educate the whole person, no matter at how low a level the education will stop, and whether the individual is destined for a career as a spindle-tender in a cotton mill or a creative thinker at the summit of the country's intellectual life.

(6) *Adult literacy*, which excites automatic enthusiasm among developing country politicians and Western do-gooders, is not of comparable importance. Each country has to decide whether it can afford both full development of school education and a simultaneous effort to save a generation or half-generation of

people who had no schooling. If a real job can be done on the new generations as they come along, a developing country would be justified, if forced to it by economic necessity, virtually to forget about educating the older people.

But if something is to be done with the dropouts and the unschooled, then a specially designed effort is required, quite different from anything in the school system itself. Reading materials for adult new-literates need the same language simplicity as primary-school books, but the content must be such as will interest adult minds.

Some Asian and African and Latin American countries will undoubtedly reach the negative decision suggested above, but others will make adult literacy a major enterprise. Because of the numbers involved while the educated new generation is replacing the old, that will be a large order.

#### *Media and Communications*

These revolutionary developments in education need the oncoming communications revolution to make them work. But, in turnabout fashion, the communications revolution depends on education to provide the staff for handling its intricate machinery and to create the mass audience to receive its messages. Unexpected things will no doubt happen as these movements proceed, but predictions can be made about the main lines of development.

*First*, if there is to be a truly mass system of communication, it will be necessary to develop methods and devices permitting lowest possible unit cost per

citizen reached. That, in turn, will have critical meaning for all branches of the communications industry.

Included will be printing, publishing, broadcasting, film-making and the industries producing the needed supplies such as paper, ink and adhesives for printed matter; radio and TV receivers; and batteries and small generators to provide electricity at points remote from power sources. The economic as well as technological by-products of this will be history-making in themselves. In some of these areas Western technology itself must advance; in others, the problem is merely to transfer the existing technology to the developing countries.

*Second*, the communications system will be "multi-media," whether for the general public or in school use. Many Asian and African and Latin American schools a decade hence may well have not only classroom teachers, not only books, not only radio, not only TV, not only films, but elements drawn from the whole range of modern methods of communicating with masses of people.

Electronic and other new media should increase rather than decrease the need for traditional materials such as printed matter. That is not merely because the overall educated public will be enlarged but also because of the need for consolidating and making permanent the powerful though transitory impact of the lesson received through electronics.

The need for conventional materials can thus be expected to increase not only in the classroom but also in supplementary school use (notably in school libraries) and in general public use. Introduction of new media will surely

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cause some economic dislocations, but in the long run there should be many more readers of newspapers, magazines and books and a great expansion of school and public libraries.

### *The Case for Regionalization*

*Third*, there will be a strong incentive to seek *multinational solutions* of many communications problems. The extent to which the possibilities can be realized will of course depend on political and other considerations, but economic logic clearly points in that direction.

It is beyond the economic capability of each small country in Africa, for instance, to have its own full book-publishing industry, its own satellite or even its own full programming for educational TV, its own production of films, its own paper mills, its own manufacture of receivers and batteries.

Every country, no matter how small, must have its own printing plant. Yet here too it will not be possible for each nation to support a plant large enough to produce at the low costs that can be achieved only with mass production.

Two of the largest printing plants on the African continent are in Guinea and Ghana. These huge modern establishments, built in Conakry and at Tema near Accra with Eastern bloc assistance, are far larger than the two countries would require even years from now.

Each of the two leaders, Sekou Touré and Nkrumah, had the vision of profit through serving the printing needs of all of West Africa, and they were right in the basic thought. Aside from the problem of competition with each other the two plans

were theoretically sound.

If politics would permit it, a large modern plant able to capture the economies of mass production should be able to give the region better books at much lower prices. An even smaller country, Kuwait, also has a regionally significant printing enterprise, producing the magazine *Al Arabi*, which has wider readership than any other publication in Arabic. Still another tiny country, Lebanon, is an active centre of book publication and distribution for the whole Arab world.

An even stronger case for regionalization can be made when it comes to newer techniques such as educational broadcasting by satellite. Even aside from the possibility of multi-channel broadcasting in different languages, think of the prospect—politics permitting—of an educational programme via satellite serving Latin America in Spanish, or one or another of the different parts of sub-Saharan Africa in English or French.

And there are equally logical possibilities for reaching Iran and Afghanistan in the Persian language; West Pakistan and parts of India in Urdu; East and West Bengal in Bengali; parts of Ceylon and India in Tamil; and any one of several groupings of Arabic-speaking countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

### *Politics and Education*

Perhaps politics will prove an insuperable obstacle, but some kind of modus vivendi has been found on comparable issues that seem at least as delicate—for instance, the division of the Nile waters among Uganda, Sudan and

the U.A.R. So logical a scheme as regional educational broadcasting might be workable at least with respect to subjects which are not especially sensitive politically—such as mathematics and the natural sciences, including health and agriculture.

A number of projects looking toward regionalism in education have been started. There was a modestly successful project, centred in Cameroun, for joint textbook production with Chad, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville) and the Central African Republic. The organization called SEAMES (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Secretariat) based in Bangkok is barely under way, but a hopeful sign is that the Asian Development Bank has indicated readiness to cooperate with SEAMES for providing capital for educationally oriented facilities for regional use.

And attention should be given to the West African Examination Council, a kind of "College Board" that should have significant influence on school curricula. Some degree of uniformity in secondary school curricula is a prerequisite to effective multi-country use of textbooks, films, and radio and TV broadcasts.

The *fourth* and last of the predictions that might be risked at this distance is that there will be even *more intense competition for control of the channels of communication*. Many of the motivations will have little to do with education. They will include ideology, nationalism, profit, and individual political ambition. That is nothing new in the world, and it is not unknown in our own history.

But the temptations will be much greater in Asia, Africa and Latin America

because of both the newness and the uniqueness of the pervasive system created for educational purposes but susceptible of use for quite different purposes. And given the huge potential for growth in the communications industry, there will be severe temptations to establish monopolies or otherwise control supplies of component parts of the system.

#### *Impact on Economics*

What will be the effect of all these developments? In the business-industrial field there will be an elaborate series of inter-connected movements relating to the needs of the new industries for capital, personnel, equipment and materials. There may be an impact on the construction industry in connection with remodeling schools as well as building new ones. In arranging to meet all those needs the countries may proceed in hit-or-miss fashion, or the requirements may be wisely integrated in overall national plans. Either way, there will be a conflict of values or of desired ends.

One economic question that will recur frequently is whether a country should strive for self-sufficiency in providing the continuing supplies, such as paper and batteries, which the communications industry will need.

As an example, take the case of paper supply for a country that happens to be sugar-producing. In the long run will it be best for the country to continue bearing the foreign-exchange burden of importing paper? Or should it join with neighbours in some regional scheme? Or should it create its own paper industry for which the raw material might be bagasse

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(the fibre remaining after sugar has been extracted from cane)? If the last alternative is chosen, what fuel will replace the bagasse formerly burned as the chief power source for the refining industry?

Another kind of decision relating to the communications industry has to be made with respect to foreign investment. Joint ventures with experienced foreign firms from developed countries may be especially useful not only in bringing in capital and managerial experience but also in supplying patent rights, knowledge about how to train personnel, and access to world sources of equipment and raw materials.

But even aside from xenophobia and other psychological factors that have brought disaster to some of the joint efforts in other fields, there are delicacies as to the country's foreign-investment laws. And especially careful planning is needed to coordinate company training plans with the public vocational education system. Each tentative answer leads to new questions, and the process seems never-ending.

It does appear, however, that national planners in more and more of the Asian and African countries—sometimes even with the help of computers—are now capable of envisaging the full gamut of relationships among the different factors. Too often in the past the new countries have jumped headlong into some project and then discovered that the effect on some other sector was highly adverse. There is now reason to hope that the social and economic side effects of the changes in education and communications can at least be anticipated, even if not in all ways provided for.

One area in which no computer is needed to predict that there will be change is that of the consumer-goods industries. New markets can be reached, and the desires and interests of the once-remote country people will be subject to many of the same influences that affect city folk. That will not be an unalloyed good, but there are observers who view the prospect with favor.

They think not merely of the stimulus to the consumer-goods industries but especially of the spur to increased production in the countryside itself, as new incentives and rewards are offered to the mass of the rural population. The hope of someday getting a flashlight or a radio or a bicycle could thus introduce an entirely new factor into the rural economy. Even advertisements of such gadgets could—in this view—have public benefits comparable to the editorial content of the publications or broadcasts.

The chain reaction will go on and on. Highway development is one-part of the communications revolution, and it will stimulate other parts. Conversely, improvement in other communications will be among the influences leading to still more highways. And as printed matter goes into the villages there will be requirements for an expanded postal system and for better ways of transmitting small amounts of money.

If, as is contemplated in several Asian countries, there is a movement toward "subscription selling" of groups of books, like our method of merchandising encyclopaedias, that could have a significant effect on branch banking because of the need for collection points for the instalment payments. In fact, a banker

in Afghanistan said he would be glad to have his bank make such collections without fee because the system would bring into the bank large numbers of people who might eventually become depositors.

As to the postal system, there was a fine example in Iran recently: the fortnightly mass-circulation magazine for literates was directly responsible for the opening of a couple of hundred new post offices because the publication had the requisite number of subscribers in villages that had never before enjoyed postal service.

#### *Preserving Local Cultures*

But will all this tend to snuff out local culture? Will a kind of internationalized Western music, reaching every village by some mass system, drown out the gamelans and sitars and talking drums? Will the flood of second-rate Western cultural artifacts and the dubious messages of our mass media so clog the channels that local culture will have no chance? Even within one country, will the historic subcultures be buried in a banal national uniformity?

All that is of course possible. But one of the reasons for thinking the disaster may not occur is the change of attitude, compared with ten years ago, on the part of Asian and African intellectual leaders. The change has been noteworthy in the case of the communications specialists who run the machinery of publishing, broadcasting and film-making. They have given new encouragement to folk music, folk drama, folk dance, poetry-reading in the national language and design

motifs from local crafts. Granted that they have multiplied rock and roll at the same time, there has been apparent sincerity in the effort to use modern devices as a means of preserving the traditional culture.

The attitude toward national languages in Asia is especially interesting. A decade ago the overwhelming majority of Asian educators snorted at any suggestion that there was a future for national languages in higher education, and in this they were frequently encouraged by foreign advisors. Now, however, in one country after another there has been recognition that the standard of English commanded by most university students is inadequate for intelligent use of English-language textbooks.

There have been movements—some of which have progressed quite far—for introducing university-level textbooks in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Bengali, Burmese, Thai and Indonesian; and there is an increasingly successful effort to provide young people with interesting things to read in their own language. Meanwhile, although most people agree that the average mastery of English has declined in the last decade, the number of people with some functional command of the language has increased.

One effect of the strengthening of national languages in Asia will be that writers will have a national audience to address. That will be a great encouragement; so often in the past, writers have felt that they had first to achieve mastery of English and then rush their manuscripts off to London or New York, even if the audience they wanted to reach was

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composed of their fellow citizens at home.

### *Dangers and Hopes*

But pessimistic observers will see dire misfortune in civic life, whatever the educational or cultural benefits in formal terms. They think that the communications system will be controlled by demagogues, and that a better system will merely make it easier for malefactors to gain popular support for their evil purposes.

That could happen, but there is at least an equal chance that better education and the immediacy of knowledge of

what is going on in the country and the world will not only expose demagoguery but provide a curb on corruption, stimulate individual output of energy and useful work, and perhaps in some countries (especially in Africa) create a sense of nationhood which has not so far existed.

The simultaneous revolutions may bring results inconceivable at present—such as the universal practice of family planning or a renascence in poetry. We can only be sure that, for good or ill, monumental changes are coming in both education and communications, and that all phases of life in Asia, Africa and Latin America will be affected by them.

## BOOK NOTES

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*The books briefly reviewed in these notes are available in many of the American Libraries in India. These libraries are located in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and New Delhi; also in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Patna, and Trivandrum.*

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**CONFRONTATION AND COMMITMENT**, a study of contemporary American drama 1959-66. By C.W.E. Bigsby. University of Missouri. 1968. 187 p. Serious students of contemporary drama will find much to interest them in this analysis by a British critic of the drama of confrontation and of commitment in America. Works of O'Neill, Williams, Gelber, Kenneth Brown, Bellow, Albee, Miller, Baldwin, LeRoi Jones, and Lorraine Hansberry are analyzed.

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**CENTURY 21; your life in the year 2001 and beyond.** By Daniel Stephen Halacy. Macrae Smith. 1968. 182 p. Based upon what man already knows and what he is discovering almost daily, coupled with educated guesses, the author presents what life will be like in 2001. With overtones of science fiction he shows the technological effects on all phases of life—at home, school, farming, travel, government, health, and weather, for example.

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**STUDENTS AND POLITICS IN DEVELOPING NATIONS.** ed. By Donald K. Emmerson. Praeger, 1968. 444 p. This book reports the political attitudes and behaviour of university students in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Eleven chapters examine students in as many nations: Algeria, Brazil, Chile, Communist China, The Congo, Cuba, Ghana, Indonesia, South Africa, South Viet Nam, and Venezuela. The concluding chapter is a comparative discussion.

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**AGENDA FOR THE NATION. Papers on domestic and foreign policy issues.** Brookings. 1968. 620 p. Ten papers on domestic policy issues, including one by Mr. Henry Kissinger, and eight on foreign policy issues are intended as a contribution to public discussion and debate in the U.S. at the time of transition in government. This is evidence of the concern among experts in and out of office which surfaces with special interest prior to a new Presidential term.

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**STUDENT ACTIVISM.** Comp. By Irving Howe. Bobbs. 1967. 64 p. Using the format of a reader in rhetoric, Howe has pulled together thirteen presentations which provide an excellent cross-section of the threads of argumentation running through the student rebellion in the United States. University administration, faculty, and students are all presented, with emphasis on Berkeley. Analytical pieces by Howe and Tom Kahn conclude this look at student activism.

**POLITICAL ORDER IN CHANGING SOCIETIES.** By Samuel P. Huntington. Yale. 1968. 488 p. Huntington analyzes in depth the problem of bringing political order and viability up to the level of economic and social development. After assessing various routes including revolution in the fundamental sense and reform, induced by prudence or violence, he finds the answer in the establishment of enduring political systems.

## BOOK NOTES

**APPOINTMENT ON THE MOON:** *the inside story of American space venture.* By Richard S. Lewis. Viking, 1968. The development of the American space programme from its early beginnings in World War II up to the recent and spectacular first Saturn 5 launch. The Mercury and Gemini programmes are treated in detail. Successes and failures are documented. Intermingled with the general theme of man-to-the-moon are discussions of the unmanned space probes: Mariner, Ranger, Surveyor, weather and communications satellites and how they bear on the Apollo programme.

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**ENZYMES—the agents of life.** By David M. Locke. Crown, 1969. 247 p. The story of the discovery and history of enzymes is told in a very simple yet scientifically accurate account: what they are, how they work, their structure and importance, how the body supplies them, how they are produced commercially.

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**THE NEW GUIDE: how to listen to the world.** World Publication, 1968. 184 p. The radio and television user with the hobby of tuning in on stations around the world will find this handbook useful. Information ranges from material for the beginner on the technical problems involved in reception to discussion of equipment, maintenance, formulas, and circuit diagrams for the more advanced. Advice is given on tape recording, identifying stations, radio for the blind, listening to satellites and learning languages.

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**AND OTHER STORIES.** By John O'Hara. Random, 1968. 336 p. Most of the stories and the one novella in this collection are placed in the old O'Hara setting of Gibbsville, Pennsylvania in the 20's and 30's. Many are about the misery of being rich; two are pictures of the utter squalor money makes possible. Their clean, strong, accurate style is a dimension of the understanding of humanity that has distinguished their author from the beginning.

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**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN UNDERGROUND FILM.** By Sheldon Renan. Dutton, 1967. 318 p. After defining the underground film the

author covers its history from France in the late 19th century to the U.S. in 1966. Brief sketches and a discussion of the work of 27 contemporary American's are given.

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**THE AMERICAN CINEMA; directors and directions, 1929-1968.** By Andrew Sarris. Dutton, 1968. 383 p. A comprehensive look at the American sound film from its beginnings to the present is given by a respected film critic and Professor at New York University. Directors are discussed individually from Griffith, Chaplin, Lubitsch, and Von Sternberg to Mike Nichols, Norman Jewison, Stanley Kubrick and Jerry Lewis. Included are comedians such as W.C. Fields, Mae West, and the Marx Brothers.

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**INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT; the story of Kennedy Airport and U.S. commercial aviation.** By George Scullin. Little, 1968. 319 p. A behind the scenes story of the vast facilities of a modern airport is given in this account of Kennedy International Airport in New York. There are chapters on air traffic control, air cargo service, air terminal design, fueling jets, and commercial aviation. In recounting the story the author tells of the development of air travel and aviation technology and engineering.

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**THE NEW AGE OF EXPLORATION.** By Fred Warshofsky. Viking, 1969. 173 p. This volume focuses on the tools of tomorrow: the computer, the atom, and the laser, and on the targets: the moon, the solar system, and the ocean. Fully illustrated, with a lucid text carefully checked by experts.

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**THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPORT; a phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century as discovered, explored, and interpreted by the editors, writers, reporters, photographers, and artists of Sports Illustrated.** Time, 1968. 324 p. Some of the most exciting moments in sport have been caught in this stunning collection of colour photographs with accompanying captions from Sports Illustrated during its thirteen years of publication. Some of the writers represented are John Peter Marquand, John Dos Passos, Ogden Nash, William Faulkner, Clare Boothe Luce, George Plimpton, and John Steinbeck.